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NO SURPRISES IN RUSSIAN POLLS AS PUTIN IS ALL SET TO RETAIN POWER

Three days of voting came to an end on Sunday. Three candidates, who are Kremlin-friendly, were Putin's rivals in the Presidential elections

OPPOSITION ASKS VOTERS TO COME LATE

Notably, rival candidates have not criticised Putin's 24-year rule or his invasion of Ukraine two years ago. His fiercest opponent Alexei Navalny died in Arctic prison last month. Before his death, Navalny had endorsed an opposition call asking those who are unhappy with Putin to come to polling station at noon on Sunday. It is not clear if this call was a success

PROTESTERS THROW INK IN BALLOT BOXES

- Multiple cases of vandalism were reported at polling stations. A woman threw a firebomb at a polling station entrance and many across the country were detained for throwing ink into ballot boxes
- Western leaders have called the Russian election a travesty of democracy. And, there are no international observers for polls | P9

2036

RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION ALLOWS PUTIN TO STAY IN OFFICE FOR 12 MORE YEARS

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Rahul ends yatra in Mumbai, says EVMs win polls for BJP

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday tore into the Bharatiya Janata Party as he addressed the closing rally of his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Mumbai. Alleging that the saffron party wins elections because of EVMs, he said his party went to the election commission to show them how it operates. "But the election commission refuses to do that. Why? Voters should know whether their vote is really going to the person to whom they voted for," he said.

Rahul said the people will believe the Congress' five guarantees rather than Naredra Modi's guarantees and will vote for the grand old party in the Lok Sabha elections. He highlighted the Congress' promises of legalising the minimum support price in favour of farmers and overhauling the GST regime to get rid of taxation on agricultural materials.

Rahul along with Priyanka, Tushar Gandhi (in green), great-grandson of the Mahatma, at a padayatra in Mumbai on Sunday | PTI

The mega rally was attended by most INDIA bloc allies. However, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav did not attend. The Left parties also skipped the rally. During his yatra, Rahul travelled 4,000 km and understood people's problems, he said. Chiding the media for not doing its job and working for the establishment, Rahul said,

He alleged that BJP is misusing the central agencies to poach the Opposition leaders. He claimed a senior Congress leaders from Maharashtra who recently joined the BJP had told Sonia Gandhi that he was do so under duress. The leader said if he does not join BJP, he would be put in jail, he added.

Latest EB data show parties love to hide than disclose

Only DMK, AIADMK, JD(S) and NC revealed names of donors

FOLLOW THE MONEY

DMK

- **₹509 crore** from Future Gaming and Hotel Services
- **₹105 crore** from Megha Engineering
- **₹10 crore** from India Cements
- **₹10 crore** from Sun TV

JD-S

- **₹89.75 crore** (₹50 cr from Megha Engineering and rest from Aditya Birla Group, Infosys, JSW and Embassy Group)

AIADMK

- **₹6.05 crore** (Most of it from India Cements)

National Conference

- **₹50 Lakh** from Bharti Group

BOND-ED PARTIES	
BJP	₹6,986.5 cr
TMC	₹1,397 cr
Congress	₹1,334 cr
BRS	₹1,322 cr
BJD	₹944.5 cr
DMK	₹656.5 cr
YSR Congress	₹442.8 cr
TDP	₹181.35 cr
JD(S)	₹89.75 cr
AAP	₹69 cr
Shiv Sena	₹60.4 cr
RJD	₹56 cr
NCP	₹50.51 cr
Sikkim Krantikari Morcha	₹15.5 cr
Samajwadi party	₹14.05 cr
Akali Dal	₹7.26 cr
AIADMK	₹6.05 cr
National Conference	₹50 Lakh

ZERO BOND PARTIES

- BSP
- CPI-M
- CPI
- All-India Forward Bloc
- CPI-ML
- Maharashtra Navnirman Sena,
- AIMIM
- AIUDF
- Zoram People's Movement
- Asom Gana Parishad
- Bodoland People's Front
- Kerala Congress (Mani)

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) on Sunday uploaded the remaining data on the purchase and redemption of electoral bonds that political parties had shared with it and which was submitted to the Supreme Court in a sealed cover. The ECI published the details after it got the sealed cover back from the apex court. Parties had filed data on electoral bonds in sealed cover as directed by the apex court's interim order of April 12, 2019.

The fresh disclosure by the ECI shows that only a few parties — DMK, AIADMK, JD(S), and National Conference — have revealed the name of their donors.

The poll panel's latest disclosure is part of the data dump pertaining to a total of 523 recognised and non-recognised parties made public on the Supreme Court's orders. According to reports, the latest data pertain to the period before April 12, 2019.

"Data so received from political parties was deposited in the Supreme Court without opening sealed covers. In pursuance of the SC's order of March 15, the Registry of the Supreme Court has returned physical copies along with a digitized record of the same in a pen drive in sealed cover. The Election Commission has uploaded the data received in the digitized form from the registry of the Supreme Court on electoral bonds on its website," EC said.

The fresh disclosure by the ECI is part of the data dump pertaining to a total of 523 recognised and non-recognised parties made public following a direction by the Supreme Court. This was followed by another dataset published by the ECI last week after SBI shared with it. SBI was sole bank authorised to sell and redeem now defunct electoral bonds.

The data show that BJP has got the highest funds at ₹6,986.50 cr, followed by TMC at ₹1,397 cr, and Congress ₹1,334 cr. The latest disclosure is based on the declarations given by parties in November last year on the bonds redeemed by them since the scheme was launched in early 2018. It includes scanned copies of the disclosures by parties, running into hundreds of pages.

Int'l students of Guj varsity attacked over prayer row, MEA intervenes

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

STUDENTS hailing from different foreign countries were allegedly assaulted by a mob in the Gujarat University hostel in Ahmedabad for offering namaz in the facility's building, police said on Sunday. A student from Sri Lanka and another from Tajikistan had to be hospitalised.

Ahmedabad Police Commissioner GS Malik said an FIR was registered against 20-25 people and they will be arrested soon.

According to police sources, the incident was reported at around 10.50 pm on March 16 when two dozen people barged into the hostel and objected to students offering namaz in the facility where they stayed.

The students pointed out that there is no mosque on the Ahmedabad-based campus. So, they had assembled inside the hostel to perform taraweeh, a nightly prayer during Ramadan. A student from Afghanistan said that a mob came to the hostel and shouted slogans, questioning their right to pray in the hostel. "They assaulted us within our rooms, destroying laptops, phones, and vandalizing bikes," he said.

The student mentioned among the five injured individuals, there is one from Afghanistan, one from Sri Lanka, one from Turkmenistan, and two from African nations.

Sources said the hostel's security guards tried to intervene but the assailants continued to assault the students. There are around 300 international students enrolled at the Gujarat University. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the state government is taking decisive action against those responsible.

WELCOME DROPS

Relief from heat, expect rain next two to three days

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

HERE is some good news. Karnataka, facing an acute shortage of water due to severe drought, is expected to get light to moderate showers in south-interior and Malnad regions in the next two to three days. Bidar and Kalaburagi witnessed some rain on Sunday.

Former director of the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre Srinivas Reddy said there is a cloud formation in south-interior Karnataka and Malnad regions. Also, a trough seen near Tamil Nadu will have some impact on Karnataka.

"From March 20 or 21, there will be shower for two to three days," he said. This will not help fill up dams or increase groundwater levels. "But any rain will help as it will bring down temperature for some time. People should harvest this water. Any amount of rain harvesting will help as it will reduce the burden on drinking water," he said.

Officials said 36-40 mm of rain is expected in April and 86 mm in May. The India Meteorological Department has forecast a good monsoon this year. "We are hoping for good rain from July," Reddy said.

According to KSNDMC data, temperature is 1 to 3 degrees Celsius above normal in some parts of the state. The state government has already declared 223 taluks drought-prone.

Meanwhile, major reservoirs in the state continue to see a dip in water levels. Of the total capacity of 895.62 tmcft in 123 major reservoirs, the present level is 284 tmcft, as against 386 tmcft last year.

Royal Challengers Bangalore are crowned champions during the final of the Women's Premier League 2024 in New Delhi on Sunday | SPORTZPICS

EE SALA CUP NAMDU!

Delhi Capitals once again fell short in the final as Royal Challengers Bangalore were crowned the champions of the second season of the WPL in New Delhi...

SHAFALI VERMA PACKS A PUNCH IN POWERPLAY

On a surface where every batter found it hard to get a start, Shafali Verma breezed through the powerplay with 42 runs off just 21 balls, which included two fours and three sixes. Over her hitting spree, she smashed 19 runs off Renuka Singh Thakur's second over

SOPHIE MOLINUEX'S PERFECT OVER

With Delhi Capitals flying at 9.14 runs per over, Molinuex broke open the game with an over with three wickets in an over. It started with the wicket of Verma off the first ball. Verma tried to hit the Australian over the ropes only to find the fielder. Jemimah Rodrigues and Alice Capsey followed. DC never recovered and were bowled out for 113

FOUR FOR SHREYANKA

Shreyanka Patil, who missed out on a few matches in the tournament, came back in style to take four wickets in the final to dismantle DC's hopes. With 13 wickets in the season, she became the highest wicket-taker of the season taking over the likes of Marizanne Kapp and Jess Jonassen | P11

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DSAT DATES : 6th April 2024 / 7th April 2024 / 4th May 2024 / 5th May 2024 / 25th May 2024 / 26th May 2024 / 8th June 2024 / 9th June 2024

ALMANAC TODAY
Monday: 18/03/2024 • Year: Shobhakruta • Ayana: Uttharayana • Ritu: Sishira • Masa: Phalguna • Paksha: Sukla • Tithi: Navami 2.11 am • Nakshatra: Ardra 9.36 pm • Moon in Kataka Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am • Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 20°C | MAX 34°C
FORECAST
Mostly sunny

Sunrise 06.25 am
Sunset 06.30 pm
Moonrise 12.58 pm
Moonset 01.29 am

RESIDENTS IN MAHADEVAPURA ZONE BLAME CIVIC AGENCIES FOR NOT TAKING ANY ACTION; UNPLANNED DEVELOPMENT, ABUSE OF GROUNDWATER BLAMED FOR CRISIS

ILLEGAL LAYOUTS, BOREWELLS SUCK OUT GROUNDWATER

MOHAMMED YACOOB
@ Bengaluru

Empty water cans kept outside a shop near Domlur, as the water problem grows in Bengaluru on Sunday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

H2O heat
PART 5

WITH areas in the city's famed IT corridor of KR Pura, Horamavu, Whitefield, Varthur, Bellandur, Marathahalli, and Hoodi facing an acute shortage of water this summer, residents and activists allege that the crisis has gone up multifold due to the failure of civic agencies in curbing illegal layouts and borewells failing under the Mahadevapura Zone.

According to Sandeep Anirudhan, convenor, Citizens' Agenda for Bengaluru, fly-by-night builders and real estate mafia from out of the state are mostly responsible for the crumbling infrastructure in the zone and also for the borewells going dry. He alleged that despite repeated complaints about illegal buildings, layouts, and borewells, none of the civic agencies acted resulting in water shortage in the zone.

Anirudhan says that houses and apartment complexes in Whitefield that have Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) connections get water once a fortnight or a month, which is not sufficient. "Individual borewells have also gone dry due to over-exploitation and groundwater theft by commercial buildings. Even public borewells in CMC areas have dried up due to groundwater theft by commercial buildings. Tankers have become the only source of water, and they too are unable to meet the demand as their borewells too have gone dry," Anirudhan added. He says this forces the private tankers to travel to rural areas to procure water, and this has forced them to hike tanker charges making it unaffordable for many.

He said illegal buildings are still being constructed mostly by out-of-state builders, and illegal borewells are still being sunk. And borewell water, although banned for construction use, is being blatantly abused by builders, while the masses suffer without drinking water, added Anirudhan. "To summarise, the water crisis in the area is an outcome of unplanned development — illegal layouts, illegal buildings, and groundwater abuse, all originating in the greed of the 'fly-by-night' real estate mafia from neighbouring states... construct illegal buildings, commit violations, sell them off and flee, leaving the city to deal with the consequences of their actions," opined Anirudhan.

While the illegal layouts and rampant drilling of borewells are blamed for groundwater depletion, Kochu Shankar, a resident of Ramamurthynagar Residents' Welfare Association, held BWSSB accountable as since 2019, there has been no water flowing from their taps. "We were promised water under the Cauvery Stage V project. The board even collected betterment charges from residents at Horamavu and Ramamurthynagar promising water. But every time they skip the deadline to commission Caubery Stage V," rued Shankar.

Reacting to the water crisis, BWSSB Chief Engineer, Bengaluru East, Kumar Naik said that BWSSB has already announced uninterrupted water as there is enough water in dams till July. On water tankers, he said the State Government has already acted and has fixed a cap on water tanker prices.

Tankers flouting rules to face action

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

MENTIONING that almost 95 per cent of the registration of all private water tankers is completed, BWSSB Chairman Ramprasath Manohar on Sunday warned, "Legal action will be initiated against those tankers which are found operating without registering with the government."

Manohar visited the slum areas around Bhashyam Park, Deenabandhu Nagar, Sri Ramanagari, and other localities, and obtained first-hand information about the supply of drinking water through tankers.

"I have directed officials to ensure proper supply of water, where Cauvery connection has already been provided," Manohar said, adding that drinking water is being supplied free of

cost, through tankers, to those areas where there is acute shortage.

The areas outside the city limits have not yet been provided with Cauvery water connection, and the dependency on ground water is heavy there, the BWSSB chairman said. He added that steps will be taken to mitigate the water woes of people in the areas beyond BBMP (110 villages) limits.

Tankers must fix stickers

Meanwhile, the BBMP has directed private tankers that have registered with the government, to affix stickers with details of vehicle number, owner's name, and self-registration number, on the vehicles. Those vehicles without stickers will not be allowed to operate. Private tankers must supply water adhering to rates fixed by the government, and unregistered tankers will not be permitted to do so. If any private tankers are found violating rules, or there is a problem with water quality, citizens can call '1916' and '1533', said Surolkar Vikas Kishore, Special Commissioner of the Health Department.

CM TO MEET OFFICIALS TODAY OVER WATER CRISIS

Bengaluru: As Bengaluru is facing one of its worst summers this year with borewells running dry and tankers fleecing residents, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will chair a meeting to discuss water problems in the city on Monday. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, top officials from BWSSB, BBMP and other departments will take part in the meeting scheduled for noon. Slamming the chief minister, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka posted on X, "Despite knowing that there is drought, instead of taking precautionary measures and alternatives, the Congress-led state government is irresponsible and showed negligent attitude towards solving the problem." He said the Monday meeting should not be eyewash and listed a few suggestions.

Four city students develop app to tackle food wastage

PURAN CHOUDHARY
@ Bengaluru

FOUR students passionate about technology are on a mission to address a crucial problem in the food industry. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Food Wastage Index Report 2023, Indians waste 68.7 million tonnes of food annually. The country stands second in household food wastage, followed by China. During food production as well, 35% of the food produced ends up rotting, revealed the data.

These young students pursuing Computer Science and Electronic Communication Engineering at the International Indian Institute of Information Technology, Bengaluru (IIIT-B) found an innovative approach to tackle this wastage on a large scale – especially in expansive restaurant setups.

Pranav Bhutada, Kushal Partani, Yash Gupta, and Siddharth Chauhan developed an IT solution incorporating gas sensors for real-time monitoring of food freshness that employs advanced machine learning algorithms to analyse the sensor data charts and warn of possible spoilage. Their low-cost, user-friendly application – FreshGaurd - aims to use gas sensor technology to detect freshness and impurities, aiding producers in efficiently managing and selling perishable goods while ensuring that consumption of the products is safe, healthy, and of good quality.

Speaking to The New Indian Express, Pranav, one of the co-developers of the app, said, "The simple explanation is that all food products emit some gases be it vegetables, fruits, milk or other edible items when they start rotting. These sensors record those readings which are then sent to a machine-learning model. We have to first train the model on what is good and bad values based on the products and their parameters. Over time, the model learns the pattern and accurately identifies the health value of the perishable goods."

He added that the app can project the data for hundreds of containers in cold storage or otherwise. "This will all be real-time data. We have made a prototype and measured the quality of milk so far. Individuals can train the model for different items. The device is cost-effective, all the sensors combined only cost Rs 1,000 in the current market price ."

The device will have a network of 7 to 12 gas sensors based on the requirements which will be strategically positioned to detect gases such as Carbon Monoxide, Methane, Hydrogen, and volatile organic compounds whose presence can have an impact on one's organs. The group wants their solution "to make a long-term impact" and wants to price it at Rs 2,000 to help small-scale and large businesses.

BBMP creates awareness on managing waste

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

BBMP South zone officials perform a street play to create awareness on waste segregation and ban on single use plastics, in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

THE BBMP on Sunday carried out a mass awareness campaign on solid waste management in South Zone. Led by South Zone Commissioner Vinoth Priya R, Palike officials used the medium of street plays and distributed pamphlets to sensitise the public about segregation of waste at source -- into wet, dry and sanitary waste, along with the different options to manage it.

"Wet waste is collected every day from the doorstep by auto tippers. Dry waste is collected twice a week," said Vinoth Priya, calling upon residents to hand over garbage only to the BBMP, and refrain from discarding it into empty plots or by the roadside.

BBMP officials also spread the word about the ban on single-use plastic and distributed cloth bags to people at Sarakki and Madiwala markets. Reiterating that there is a ban on the use of single-use plastic, BBMP officials asked people to carry cloth bags and other eco-friendly materials, and avoid using plastic bags.

Russell Market says no to Israeli dates

MOHAMMED YACOOB
@ Bengaluru

RUSSELL Market, which was catapulted to a major date supplier for Karnataka region in the last 20 years, has witnessed a two-fold increase in supply of dates, thanks to the supply of dates from South Africa, Iran, Tunisia and other parts.

The traders, however, maintain that following the conflict between Israel and Palestine over Gaza, they have stopped the purchase of 'King Solomon' brand dates from Israel.

Mohammed Idrees Chaudary, general secretary of Russell Market, told The New Indian Express, "Earlier, only Lion brand dates were being marketed and supplied by others. But the last several years of struggle in getting supply of fresh and quality dates from Iran, Mecca and Medina, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Jordan in South Africa, and Turkey are getting enough dates and are likely to distribute them to the rest of Karnataka."

Dates like Mambroom, Medjoul, Barhi, Mazafat, Sagai, Ajwa, Sukkary and others are brought and are on display. They are available from Rs 150 to Rs 1,600 under one roof.

"The dates are not just purchased by the Muslim community for Ramadan to break their fast as per tradition. After Covid-19, people from other communities are also buying them. Priests from Iskcon, Bengaluru, Christian priests and political leaders buy these dates which are good for health. The dates contain natural sugar and are rich in iron and dietary fibre," stated Choudary. The traders would earlier buy Medjoul dates from Israel under the brand name King Solomon, which are big in size. These dates are soft and creamy and are priced at Rs 1,650 per kilo.

"Since there is a conflict between Palestine and Israel, we have stopped buying dates from Israel over the past few years and now many traders from Muslim nations are favouring buying dates from Palestine. We also have Medjoul dates from Palestine this time," said Chaudhary.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

18TH March : My sign of the day is Virgo. If you know anyone born under this sign then you may be interested in what the old astrologers said about it: 'The sign of Virgo as a whole is moist and marked by thunder-storms; but, taken by part, its leading portion is rather warm and destructive, its middle temperate and its following part watery.' Does that sound right?

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
The moment you relax your grip on financial affairs, you'll run the risk of making losses. These may be minor (perhaps you will be overcharged for goods), but will nonetheless be easily avoidable. Partners are feeling the pinch, so offer tea and sympathy if they get irritable.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
This week's constructive atmosphere may mark a turning-point between two phases in personal aspirations. The transition may not always be smooth, but you'll handle your affairs with great care and understan-ding. And always remember - it's good to clear the air.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
You may feel as if you're caught between two opposing options, uncertain which is the best way to free yourself from an impasse. The answer lies in your own hands and it's absolutely necessary that you truly understand your deeper motivations. Once you know what you want, you can get it!

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Your friends and partners may now be under much more pressure than you, which makes for a change. Why not use this opportunity to help those in need and repay past favours? The general tone of the times, by the way, is lively and original, so no settling for the old and familiar. Try new options.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
The point to grasp is that contrasts and contradictions between your personal and professional lives will always be with you, and that you can only do yourself good by dealing with awkward choices and facing hard facts. Partners should respond best if you are totally honest.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
You are well-known for your sympathetic and compassionate qualities, and friends will be trooping to your door with problems for you to solve. Be your normal patient self. There do seem to be changes coming at work, so keep an eye out for interesting openings.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
All the signs point to the likelihood that you've just had, or are about to receive, a serious financial opportunity. In the final analysis, you know that only you are responsible for any losses or gains. The simple advice is to steer clear of strangers bearing false promises.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
Recent events should have been good for your morale. Emotionally, you might be wondering just what has hit you, and why you have been singled out for such intriguing treatment. If there's too much to handle, then stay calm, don't panic and hang on to your secrets.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
It's difficult to think of a more fascinating astrological pattern than that which will be affecting many people around you. It could be a little while longer before the old certainty returns. It could even be a few weeks, so keep your plans good and flexible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
Friends have been sending out mixed messages, and while you're willing to trust that events will work out as planned, a degree of doubt is creeping in. After today, planetary pressures will continue to be tense, but that could be helpful if it stirs you out of a rut.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
It would be an understatement to suggest that current stars are confused. But, then, sometimes it's good to have your options all mixed up. And even if you score the slightest success against overwhelming odds, you will deserve sincere congratulations. If you relish change, so much the better.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
This is a fine time to hold important discussions, not least because partners may at last be ready to see your point of view. The trouble is that family members tend to regard anything you say as a personal challenge. Help yourself by being polite, diplomatic and considerate.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

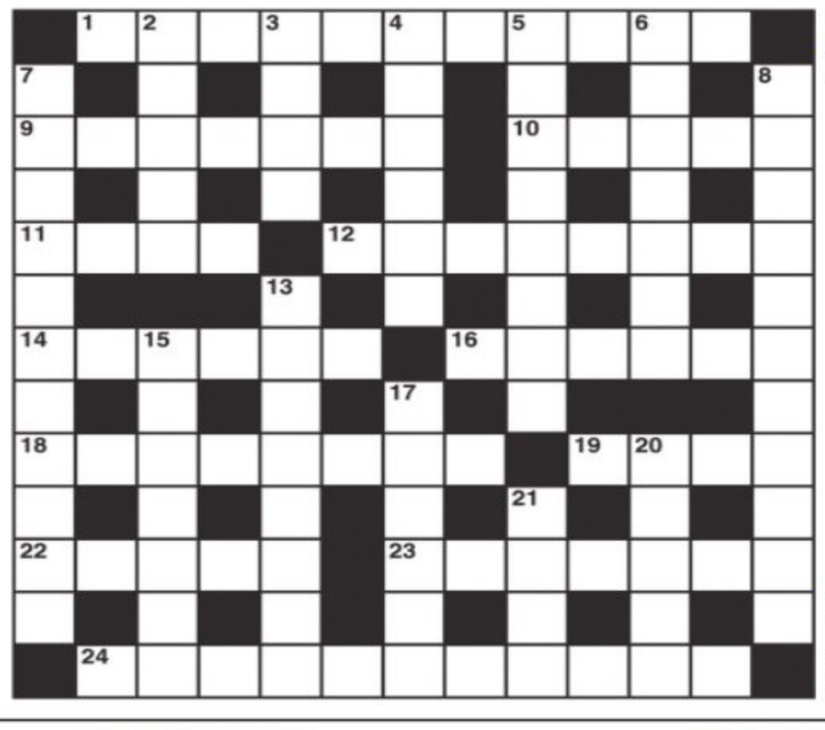
9			2			7		
	7			1	9	3	2	
1					3			8
3		9	7					
4			8	9	1			7
					4	8		9
8			1					3
	4	3	5	6			7	
		1			2			4

4	7	8	9	5	3	1	6	2
6	3	2	8	1	4	5	9	7
1	9	5	6	2	7	8	4	3
8	6	4	1	3	9	7	2	5
7	5	9	4	8	2	3	1	6
3	2	1	5	7	6	4	8	9
9	8	6	7	4	5	2	3	1
5	1	3	2	6	8	9	7	4
2	4	7	3	9	1	6	5	8

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 Not an artist producing great works of art? (11)
9 Where one may pray for eloquence of speech (7)
10 New job an instrumentalist gets to work on (5)
11 Journey in South Africa (4)
12 They may put up houses for sale (8)
14 Tin or tape cutter (6)
16 It's experienced in poetic form (6)
18 He sends abroad for money (8)
19 Emperor in knight's armour (4)
22 Pushing forwards (5)
23 Dry wine for those taking flight (7)
24 Fill a position as a successful astronaut? (2,4,5)

DOWN
2 Angry as a rodent that is trapped (5)
3 I have an old-fashioned image (4)
4 An open-air practice? (3-3)
5 Pretty girl in red and rose (8)
6 Possibly resigns from the choir (7)
7 Consort very disturbed by argument (11)
8 Like one who cares or is a decent sort (11)
13 The offer of money may make him cross (8)
15 Some grass to spare perhaps (7)
17 Breaks a leg to play on without a pause (6)
20 A very good bearer (5)
21 Baggage in the hold (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Cheats, 4 Thorough, 9 Meadow, 10 Glossary, 12 Onus, 13 Satyr, 14 Idea, 17 Nuts and bolts, 20 Evening class, 23 Real, 24 Shore, 25 Etui, 28 Innuendo, 29 Dahlia, 30 Gunsmith, 31 Pursue.

Down: 1 Compound, 2 Evacuate, 3 Toot, 5 Hilly country, 6 Rash, 7 Uganda, 8 Heyday, 11 Paid on the dot, 15 Halve, 16 Stick, 18 Tantalus, 19 Estimate, 21 Trying, 22 Cannon, 26 Term, 27 Tabu.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

GTIFH

GUDHO

SETVIN

EQAPOU

Keep above 10 fathoms if this is your first time. That's 60 feet, in case you didn't know.
I had no idea it was that deep!
HE DIDN'T KNOW A FATHOM EQUALED SIX FEET BECAUSE THAT UNIT OF MEASURE WAS ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: GRANT PRIOR MUDDLE GLOBAL
Answer: The 6' 9", 350-pound circus clown showed off his new shirt — UNDER THE BIG TOP

Kumar (32), a food delivery agent, died on the spot, while his friend sustained injures, after he rammed his bike into the safety wall of Chikkajala flyover, on Saturday. His friend, Prince (29), is currently undergoing treatment. They were heading home in Wilson Garden, at around 7 pm, when the accident occurred

Man gets 5 yrs RI for faking to be CM's secretary

White-collared offence bleeds nation's economy as society suffers at large: Judge

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

A SPECIAL Court sentenced John Michael (43) to five years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 44.10 lakh for impersonating as the personal secretary of then chief minister Dharam Singh. He had cheated three people on the pretext of getting them sites allotted from the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) under the CM's discretionary quota. The convict is a resident of TC Palya.

Terming the act as a white-collared offence which bleeds the nation's economy as the society at large is the sufferer, Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat ordered him to compensate the victims with the fine. N Sreedharan, the then associate vice-president of a private bank, was awarded Rs 12 lakh, Tapan Bhandari Rs 26 lakh, and his wife Chanda Bhandari Rs 6 lakh. The remaining amount is ordered to be forfeited to the state.

"When the evidence of the prosecution is examined in its entirety, it indicates the act was committed by the accused, hence the prosecution has proved its case beyond reasonable doubt," the judge said.

The Special Public Prosecutor contended that several cases are pending against the accused in other states and also before this court. The act of the accused has to be viewed seriously as he is a snollygoster who was in the habit of cheating and defrauding the public. She prayed the court to impose maximum punishment.

The accused had induced these three people through their common friend Anthony, who was working as a sales officer in the bank where Sreedharan worked, to part with a huge amount on the pretext of getting them BDA sites by impersonating as the PS of the then CM. He collected Rs 11.13 lakh from Sreedharan, Rs 25.23 lakh from Tapan and Rs 5 lakh from Chanda and handed over fake site allotment letters and BDA sale deeds, at a star hotel. Asked how the sale deeds were issued without the signature of the allottees, Michael told them that he used his influence to get the work done.

After handing over site papers in 2010, he went incommunicado, following which, Sreedharan visited the sub-registrar's office to realise that the documents were fabricated and filed a police complaint. Tapan, who was working in a bank in Saudi Arabia, also filed complaint with the police commissioner in 2011. The case was initially registered by the Ramamurthynagar police before being referred to the CID.

Poll officer meets party reps, lays down rules

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

WITH the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha elections kicking in, Chief Election Officer Manoj Kumar Meena held a meeting on Sunday with representatives of national and regional political parties, to discuss the issues of parties and their candidates.

The discussion included methods of campaigning and subjects that can be spoken about. Meena told the representatives to help them enrol people, check their names on the voters' list and to create awareness about voting. He said that since political parties and candidates are well aware of the ground situation, they should help people who face issues like getting voter ID cards.

Meena also said that many apps have been created, like cVIGIL, for candidates and citizens to reach out to election officials in case of complaints, and seek information. People can register complaints on the app or dial 1950, and their identity will be kept anonymous.

The public can also use Voter Helpline app to check voting details, apply for a voter ID or make any required changes. Candidates and political parties can use Suvidha, and app created by the Election Commission to file nominations and get clearances. All the apps are available on Android platforms. There is also a Know Your Candidate (KYC) app, to know all details of candidates. This app is aimed at bringing in transparency.

₹20L unaccounted cash seized ahead of polls

Bengaluru: With the Model Code of Conduct being implemented for the Lok Sabha elections, election officers and police are keeping an eye out for transportation of money, liquor, gold and other items used to lure voters. During an inspection, Ashoknagar police found unaccounted cash of Rs 13 lakh being transported in a car. Narayan (45), who was found in possession of the cash, runs a poultry in Hosur, and had come to Bengaluru to collect money from his friends. However, he failed to provide proper documents for the substantial sum. The Static Surveillance Team near Nelamangala Town nabbed Gunashekar, a native of Tamil Nadu who was en route to Tumakuru with Rs 7 lakh in cash in his car. Gunashekar is involved in the borewell drilling business.

Voter awareness programmes ahead of elections

Bengaluru: A day after the election commission announced the dates for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the officials from the state election commission organised a cycle, bike and walkers awareness programme to create awareness. Thousands of people, especially girls, participated in the walkathon and rally held, on Sunday. It was a part of the Women's Day celebrations, organised by the Chief Electoral Office, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and Cauvery Hospital. Noted actor Pranita Subhash launched the event in Marathahalli, with around 500 bikes, 1,200 cycles and many walkers participating in the event. Prantia said, "People must participate in the elections, by voting. It is the biggest festival of democracy. All women should visit the polling booth and vote in large numbers."

EXPRESS READ

4 held for shootout at jewellery shop

Bengaluru: Four men have been arrested in connection with an attempted robbery case that took place at Laxmi Bankers and Jewellers in Kodigehalli police station limits on Thursday. The accused have been identified as Kahna Pandit, Ashu Pandit, Bunty, and Suraj, natives of Madhya Pradesh. Kahna and Ashu, who are cousins have committed similar crimes previously, the police said and added that they have more than 20 cases registered against them across different states.

Unsafe helmet kills ASI, SI suspended

Belagavi: An Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) died in a road accident as he was not wearing a proper full-face helmet on Saturday. Considering it as negligence of higher officials in this incident, SP Dr Bhimashankar Guled suspended the Police Sub Inspector of Dodwad police station. The deceased ASI is Vijaykant Mikali (51), a resident of Yaragatti town of Belagavi district. He was serving as ASI at Dodwad police station. The accident took place when he was returning home on a two-wheeler after his duty hours.

Couple using 'prank payment' app arrested in jewellery fraud

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

A COUPLE who had been defrauding jewellery shops by paying through a fake UPI app for gold ornaments, has been arrested by Byadarahalli police.

The accused have been identified as Nandan (40) and his live-in partner Kalpita (35). The couple would visit jewellery stores and purchase gold, typically weighing between 40gm and 100gm, and pay through a counterfeit UPI app called Prank Payment, police said.

Kalpita (35)

Nandan (40)

The app generated a fictitious payment screen showing any desired amount, which fooled the jewellery shop managements.

The case came to light when the couple reportedly bought jewellery valued at over Rs 1 lakh from Parameshwara Bankers and Jewellers, in Byadarahalli police limits.

After receiving a complaint from the owner, police examined footage from multiple cameras and traced the car in which the couple reached the store.

Police tracked their address through the vehicle's SDR number and arrested Kalpita from her residence, and subsequently arrested Nandan in Devanahalli.

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

Girinagar Branch
Ph: 9550553935/ 9760610862
E-mail: cb1821@canarabank.com

SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of GIRINAGAR BRANCH of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **20.04.2024** , for recovery of **Rs.65,93,119.58** (Rupees Sixty Five Lakhs Ninty Three Thousand One Hundred Ninteen Rupees And Fifty Eight Paisa Only) To The Girinagar Branch of Canara Bank from **MR.PRAVEEN KUMAR S** (Borrower).
Item 1: The reserve price will be **Rs 72.90 Lakhs** (Rupees Seventy Two Lakhs Ninty Thousand Only) and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.7.29 Lakhs** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **19.04.2024** Before 4.00pm.

Details and full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any.
Schedule of Property
Item No 1: Property Bearing New Municipal No-11, Old No-47/60-2,PID No.14-72-11, Sy No-161, Old No 47, Situated At 11th Cross Road, Vadara Palya Within The Jurisdiction Of Bbmp, Bengaluru(earlier Situated At Kethamaranahalli Village, Yeswanthpur Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk), Measuring East To West 25 Feet And North To South 30 Feet, Totally 750 Sq Feet Together With Residential Building, East : Road, West : Site No 48, North : Site No 52, South : Site No 50

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact Chief Manager, Girinagar Branch Canara Bank , Ph. No. 9550553935/ 9760610862 during office hours on any working day.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 14.03.2024

Sd/-Authorised Officer
Canara Bank

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

Arakere Gate Branch
Near AGN, Bannerghata Road, Bangalore - 560 097
Ph: 080 26483636, 94835 22753, E-mail: cb2753@canarabank.com

SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Arakere Gate Branch of the Canara Bank., will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **20.04.2024** for recovery of **Rs. 59,87,329.24** (Rupees Fifty Nine Lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Nine and Twenty Four Paisa Only) to the Arakere Gate Branch of Canara Bank from **Mr. Guruswamy** S/o Kashiramaiah, 4th cross, Swagath Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore - 560 097 & **Sri Naveen G** S/o. Guruswamy, No. 15, Kashiram, 4th cross, Swagath Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore - 560 097 .
The reserve price will be **Rs 105.00 Lakhs** (Rs One crore five lakhs only) and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.10.50 Lakhs** (Rs Ten lakhs Fifty Thousand only) The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **19.04.2024** before 4.00pm.
Details and full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any:
Schedule of Property: All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Site No. 15, Sy. No. 15 and 137/15, Kashiram 4th Cross, Swagath Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North - 560 097. measuring 30x 40 feet and bounded on the :East by : Site No. 16, West by : Site No. 14, North by: Site No. 3 and South by : Road.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact Chief Manager, Arakere Gate Branch Canara Bank , Near AGN, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore - 560 097 Ph. No. Ph: 080 26483636, 94835 22753, E-mail: cb2753@canarabank.com during office hours on any working day.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 15.03.2024

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
Canara Bank

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA
Stressed Asset Recovery Branch (Code No.05173)
No.11/90, 3rd Floor, Near Old Shivaji Theatre, Opp: Trust Well Hospital, J.C. Road, Bengaluru -560 002
Tel: 9535327281 | Fax No:080-28411050 | Email ID: sbi.05173@sbi.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE [RULE - 8(1)]
(For Immovable Property)

A/c Nos. HL 39818311363 & 39826607906
Whereas
The Authorized Officer of State Bank of India under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **Demand Notice dated 26.12.2023** calling upon the borrower **Mr. Tarigonda Shaik Sulthan Salavaddin**, S/o Mr. Tarigonda Shaik Mahaboob Basha, No.302, 3rd Floor, Sharadha Complex, Dodda Banaswadi Main Road, Annaiahai Reddy Layout, Banaswadi, Kalyanagar, Bangalore -560 043., AND Also At: (1) NO.17-411-12-2, Nehru Nagar, Sarada Nagar, Madanapalle, **(2) Human IT Solutions Private Limited**, Circle, 2106, 1st Floor, Block B Ardente Office, ITPL Main Road, Hoodi, Bangalore 560 048, (3) Flat No.124, Samhita Royal Splendor, Sy.No. 16/10, Basavanapura Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bangalore - 560 049. to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being of **Rs.73,22,118/- [Rupees Seventy three lakhs twenty two thousand one hundred and eighteen only]** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules on this 12th March of the Year 2024.
The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the State Bank of India for an amount of **Rs.74,75,247/-** (Rupees Seventy-four lakhs seventy-five thousand two hundred and forty-seven only) as on **11.03.2024** and interest thereon.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
SCHEDULE OF 'A' PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing present BBMP Katha No.572/1, converted Sy.No.16/10, (converted vide conversion Certificate bearing No.BDS.ALN(E)SR (Kr.Ho):24/2007-08, dated 21.05.2009, issued by the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District), situated at Basavanapura Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Earlier Bangalore South Taluk presently Bangalore East Taluk, measuring about 2 Acres 6.08 Guntas, with all rights, appurtenances whatsoever hereunder or underneath or above the surface and bounded on the:
East by : Sy.No.16/13, West by :Remaining portion Sy. No. 16/10 and Road, North by : Road and Seegehalli Village boundary, South by : Sy.No.16/12.
SCHEDULE OF 'B' PROPERTY
533.49 Sq. feet undivided right, title and interest in the Immovable property mentioned in the Schedule 'A" above.
SCHEDULE OF 'C' PROPERTY
Description of the Residential Apartment in the project "SAMHITA ROYAL SPLENDOR" to be constructed by the Purchaser/s through the Developer/Builder over the Schedule "A" Property:
01. Flat No : 124, **02. Floor :** First Floor, **03. Type of Flat :** Residential.
04. Accommodation details : Two Bedrooms, Hall, Dining and Kitchen.
05. Super Built area : 1170 Sq. feet (which includes 842 Sq. feet Carpet area. **06. Corresponding undivided share in land :** 533.49 Sq. feet.
07. Construction Specifications : RCC Roofing, Vitrified Flooring.
08. Additional Facility : One Covered Car Parking Space.

Place : Bengaluru
Date : 12.03.2024

Sd/-
Authorized Officer & Chief Manager.

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LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD.,
15/1, Hayes Centre, Hayes Road, Bangalore -560025. Ph.: 080-43003651

POSSESSION NOTICE (Rule 8(1) (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Office of the M/S, LIC Housing Finance Limited the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of security Interest(enforcement) Rule 2002 issued demand notice on below mentioned date calling upon the borrower/guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The Borrower having failed to repay the amount hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act with rule 9 of the said rules on below mentioned date.
The Borrower in particular and the public in general are here by \cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with property will be subject to the charge of M/s. LIC Housing Finance Limited for an amount notice mentioned below and interest thereon,
The Borrower attention is invited to provisions of section 13(8) of the said ACT, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets

Name of the Borrower, Loan No & Possession Taken Date	Demand Notice Date	Notice Amount	Description of the Property
Mrs. Zahida Khan **Mr. Mehtab Khan** **Loan A/c no. 410300000238** **Symbolic Possession taken date : 16/03/2024**	09/12/2022	**Rs.9619892/- (Rupees Ninety Six Lakh Nineteen Thousand Eight Hundred And Ninety Two Only)**	**Schedule for Site No.7 :** All that piece and parcel of the immovable property being a Vacant Site bearing No. 7, Presently coming under Byatarayanapura City Municipal Council, Khata No. 38, Situated at Srirampur Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk and site measuring East to West 40 feet North to South 33 feet Total Area 1320 Sq.ft. With all rights, appurtenances whatsoever whether underneath or above the surface and bounded as follows:- East by Private Property West by Site No. 8 North by Road of 20 feet South by Private Property **Schedule for Site No.8** : All that piece and parcel of the immovable property being a Vacant Site bearing No. 8, Presently coming under Byatarayanapura City Municipal Council, Khata No. 39, Situated at Srirampur Village,, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk and site measuring East to West 40 feet North to South 33 feet Total Area 1320 Sq.ft. With all rights, appurtenances whatsoever whether underneath or above the surface and bounded as follows: East by Site No. 7 West by Site No. 9 North by Road of 20 feet South by Private Property.

Place: Bangalore

Sd/- Authorized Officer
LIC Housing Finance Limited

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK
(A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

NOTICE OF SALE THROUGH PRIVATE TREATY

SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS CHARGED TO THE BANK UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002. (SARFAESI ACT)

The undersigned as Authorized Officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd.,** has taken over **Physical Possession** of the schedule property under the SARFAESI Act. The Authorized Officer of **M/s. Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd.,** had already conducted multiple public auctions for selling the property, but they turned out to be unsuccessful as no bids were received. Hence please be informed that if the total outstanding dues in the aforesaid loan account are not paid within **Fifteen (15) Days** from the date of this publication of this notice, then the Authorized officer will proceed for sale via private treaty of the property as stated below.
Public at large is informed that the secured property as mentioned in the Schedule are available for sale through Private Treaty, as per the terms agreeable to the Bank for realization of Bank's dues on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS".**
Standard terms & conditions for sale of property through Private Treaty are as under:
1. Sale through Private Treaty will be on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS".**
2. The purchaser will be required to deposit **25%** of the sale consideration on the next working day of receipt of Bank's acceptance of offer for purchase of property and the remaining amount within **15 days** thereafter.
3. The purchaser has to deposit 10% of the offered amount along with application which will be adjusted against 25% of the deposit to be made as per clause (2) above.
4. Failure to remit the amount as required under clause (2) above, will cause forfeiture of amount already paid including 10% of the amount paid along with application.
5. In case of non-acceptance of offer of purchase by the Bank, the amount of 10% paid along with the application will be refunded without any interest.
6. The purchaser should conduct due diligence on all aspects related to the property (under sale through private treaty) to his satisfaction. The purchaser shall not be entitled to make any claim against the Authorized Officer/ Secured Creditor in this regard at a later date.
7. The Bank reserves the right to reject any offer of purchase without assigning any reason.
8. In case of more than one offer, the Bank will accept the highest offer.
9. The interested parties may contact the Authorized Officer for further details/ clarifications and for submitting their application.
10. The purchaser has to bear all stamp duty, registration fee, and other expenses, taxes, duties, society dues in respect of purchase of the property.
11. Sale shall be in accordance with the provisions of SARFAESI Act/ Rules.

SCHEDULE

Sr. No.	Loan Account Number	Name of Borrower/ Co-borrowers	Amount as per 13(2) Demand Notice under SARFAESI Act.	Reserve price for private treaty	Description of Secured Assets/ Immovable Properties
1	45349660002037 45349660000761 45348640001229 47519660000035 & 45349660002191	**1) M/s. Sanvi Hotchips and Sweets,** Represented by its Proprietor, **Prema B,** **2) Mrs. Prema B,** **3) Mr. Ramesh K**	**Rs.3,46,15,675.02** (Rupees Three Crore Forty Six Lakh Fifteen Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Five and Paisa Two Only) **due as on 06-03-2023**	**Rs. 1,50,00,000/-** (Rupees One Crore Fifty Lakh Only)	**Details of Secured Assets:** All that piece and parcel of immovable dry agricultural Land in Sy.No.111, situated at Goolimangala Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore (U) District and **Bounded on: East by:** Basappa Reddy Land, **West by:** E. Srinivasa Reddy Land, **North by:** Road, **South by:** Property of V Srinivasa Reddy S/o Venkataramanappa Reddy. Measuring 0.08 Guntas out of Acre-1-14 Guntas of land

The aforesaid Borrower's/ Co-borrower's attention is invited to provisions of section 13(8) of SARFAESI Act for redemption of secured assets mentioned hereinabove by tendering the aforementioned outstanding dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the bank before the sale of secured assets.
Correspondence Address: Mrs. Syeda (Mob No.7400445147), email: syedayaseen.rana@janabank.com, Mr. Ranjan Naik (Mob No.9590858249), email: ranjan.naik@janabank.com & Mr. Umesh (Mob No.8050149617), email: umesh.m01@janabank.com. Jana Small Finance Bank Limited, (formerly known as M/s. Janalakshmi Financial Services Pvt. Ltd.), having Office The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangala Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

Date: 18.03.2024, Place: Bangalore Rural

Sd/- Authorized Officer, Jana Small Finance Bank Limited

It is likely to be a contest between former health minister Dr K Sudhakar from the BJP and Raksha Ramaiah from the Congress for the Chikkaballapur Lok Sabha constituency, the polling for which is scheduled on April 26, as part of Phase-2

AHEAD OF MEET, CONG BRASS GATHERS INFO ON ASPIRANTS

Central leaders want to go by ground report and consider opinions of local leaders before deciding on candidates

K SHIVA KUMAR @ Mysuru

WITH the Congress Election Committee (CEC) all set to meet on March 19 to finalise candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the party's high command has started gathering first-hand information on the shortlisted aspirants.

Many aspirants have stepped up lobbying to get the party ticket. The top brass is in no mood to take any chances and hence has asked sitting and former legislators to take note of the aspirants' opinions.

Informed sources said that the Central Congress leaders want to go by the ground report and consider the opinions of the local leaders before taking a call on the candidates.

AICC sources confirmed that the Pradesh Congress Committee would table internal/confidential reports before the CEC so that the deserving candidates are not denied party tickets. They also confirmed that the CEC may seek details on more aspirants and even pick a new face if there is no consensus on the candidate in a few constituencies in Karnataka.

Meanwhile, selecting a candidate in Mysuru-Kodagu and Chamarajanagar has become more challenging for the Grand Old Party. Chief Minister **Siddaramaiah** has been authorised to take a call on the candidates.

While Social Welfare Minister HC Mahadevappa has refused to contest from Chamarajanagar, the list of aspirants includes his son Sunil Bose, former MLA Nanjundaswamy, former MP M Shivanna, and KPCC women's wing president Pushpa Amarnath. The lobbying has taken a new dimension with sitting BJP MP V Srinivasa Prasad's son-in-law Mohan Kumar approaching the Siddaramaiah and DyCM DK Shivakumar for a Congress ticket.

In Mysuru-Kodagu, Siddaramaiah has categorically said that his son, Dr Yathindra, will not contest the polls, and has decided to field a candidate belonging to the Vokkaliga community. The KPCC has recommended two names — KPCC spokesperson M Lakshmana and Mysuru Congress chief BJ Vijay Kumar.

With Mysuru his home turf, the CM is leaving no stone unturned to win the prestigious constituency and has gathered opinions from his Cabinet colleagues from the district and also sitting and defeated MLAs.

Keeping his cards close to his chest, Siddaramaiah has not even hinted at his choice of candidate and is looking at the pros and cons of the aspirants as the BJP has won the psychological battle by fielding scion of the Mysuru Royal Family, Yaduveery Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, from the Mysuru-Kodagu seat.

Ruling party finds it tough to match, counter BJP strategy

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

BJP's chessboard strategy of shifting sitting MLAs and experimenting with new faces in its second list of candidates for the Lok Sabha polls, has made it a daunting task for the Congress to set up formidable matches.

Ministers in Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's cabinet are backing out from contesting for various reasons, including the PM Modi factor. "With no other option, the party leadership may give tickets to the kin of top leaders and ministers, and try out new faces with a low profile in some seats, as there are no takers," a source said.

The Congress, which had announced its first list of seven candidates, kept deferring the second list. BJP replacing sitting MP Pratap Simha with royal family scion Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar as the Mysuru-Kodagu candidate has apparently made it tough for the Congress. Many potential aspirants are backtracking, except for KPCC spokesperson M Lakshmana who is likely to be the final candidate. Interestingly, though Siddaramaiah's son and former MLA Dr Yathindra's name had created ripples in the beginning, he too backtracked as soon as Yaduveer's name came into the picture, a source said.

Shifting Shobha Karandlaje from Udupi-Chikkamagaluru to Bengaluru North, and fielding Kota Srinivasa Poojary also helped the BJP to some extent. But the Congress is committed to field former chairman of Backward Classes Commission K Jayaprakash Hegde. The party also has a tough task in Chamarajanagar, Kolar, Belagavi, Chikkodi, Ballari, Davanagere and other seats, as ministers Dr HC Mahadevappa, KH Muniyappa, Satish Jarkiholi, Nagendra and SS Mallikarjun are not ready to contest, though their names were proposed at the Congress screening committee meeting.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy's daughter Sowmya Reddy's name is finalised for Bengaluru South, and former Union minister K Rahman Khan's son Mansoor Ali Khan's name for Bengaluru Central, according to sources. But KPCC president D K Shivakumar's attempts to convince Govindaraj Nagar MLA Priya Krishna to contest from Bengaluru North went in vain.

The Congress is likely to experiment by fielding Billava community member R Padmaraju, trustee of Kudroli Gokarnanatheshwara Temple, against BJP's Captain Brijesh Chowta in Dakshina Kannada. Since AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge is unlikely to contest the polls, his son-in-law Radhakrishna Dodmani's name is almost finalised.

Modi scared of Kharge: DKS

The Congress Election Committee (CEC) meeting will be held on Tuesday, and the second list may be out on Wednesday, DCM D K Shivakumar informed the media on Sunday. "Modi has started his campaign from Karnataka, especially Kalaburagi. That shows he is scared of Kharge. Congress will win 20 seats in Karnataka, including Kalaburagi, he said.

The guarantee implementation committee members' meeting will be held on Thursday at the state, district and taluk levels, where they will be assigned Lok Sabha election responsibilities, he added.

ONE FOR THE CAMERA

BJP state president BY Vijayendra and Bengaluru South candidate Tejasvi Surya pose for a selfie with a party supporter at the election office in the constituency, in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

JDS still struggling to get seats, HDK under pressure to enter LS fray

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

JDS and its state president **HD Kumaraswamy** seem to be under tremendous pressure with the seat-sharing formula with its alliance partner BJP remaining inconclusive and Union Home Minister Amit Shah wanting him to contest the Lok Sabha election.

The only little relief till now has been BJP announcing the candidature of Dr CN Manjunath, son-in-law of former prime minister and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda, from Bengaluru Rural.

"We have sought the Kolar Lok Sabha seat, but BJP is unlikely to concede. They have been insisting on Kumaraswamy contesting from the Chikkaballapur seat," a JDS leader said. The seat-sharing will be decided at a meeting on Monday, he added.

Kumaraswamy, who called on Shah on Saturday along with Dr Manjunath, is said to have discussed seat sharing issues.

But in a sudden development on Sunday, BJP national president JP Nadda called Mandya independent MP Sumalatha to New Delhi on Monday to convince her not to insist on a BJP ticket from Mandya. She could be placated with the Chikkaballapur seat, sources said.

The regional party that won only one seat in the last Lok Sabha elections in 2019 with Congress being its alliance partner then seems to be in a crisis yet again as it is likely to get only two to three seats, including Hassan and Mandya. "We want Kumaraswamy to contest from Mandya as only he can match the opponents and get BJP votes in favour of JDS. If not him, his son Nikhil should be fielded from there, otherwise, it will be tough to face Congress candidate Venkataramane Gowda aka Star Chandru, who is moneyed," say worried JDS workers .

"The alliance seems to have helped BJP as it has nothing to lose in the Old Mysuru region and can only expect its vote base to go up. But JDS will suffer in future," an analyst observed.

'Upset' Madhuswamy likely to dump BJP, board Congress ship

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

IN a shot in the arm for the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, BJP leader and former minister **JC Madhuswamy** is likely to join the Grand Old Party. Madhuswamy lost from Chikkanayakanahalli segment in the 2023 Assembly polls to CB Suresh Babu of JDS. Madhuswamy in 2018 had defeated Babu from the same constituency.

A four-time MLA from Chikkanayakanahalli, Madhuswamy, who was with the Janata Dal in the past, had joined BS Yediyurappa KJP and later moved to the BJP camp. He has been sulking with the BJP leadership after his 2023 defeat and blamed the party leadership for his plight.

In 2023, Madhuswamy confided that it was Kiran Kumar of Congress who actually defeated him. Kiran Kumar, a Lingayat, and who is said to be close to several leaders including, Yediyurappa, polled about 50,000 votes causing the Lingayat vote to split and helping JDS' Babu to win by about 10,000 votes. Madhuswamy joining the Congress is expected to boost the party's prospects in Tiptur, Turuvekere, Chicknayakanahalli, Gubbi, Tumkur Rural, and Tumkur city.

In the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, BJP-JDS alliance has fielded V Somanna and Congress' face will be Muddahanume Gowda. This development could upset BJP here as Somanna, although a Lingayat, is not a Nolamba Lingayat, who are in the majority.

After MP GS Basavaraj, a Nolamba was not considered for a BJP ticket in Tumakuru. The Nolambas have been leaderless ever since considering their other senior leader Madhuswamy lost the 2023 elections in Chikkanayakanahalli.

Political analyst BS Murthy, who hails from Tumakuru, feels that a prominent Nolamba leader like Madhuswamy joining Congress could be an asset for the party.

I couldn't have contested polls now, I don't have that kind of money: Krishna

K SHIVA KUMAR @ Mysuru

VETERAN politician and former chief minister SM Krishna on Sunday expressed his displeasure at the current state politics, questioning the erosion of constitutional values and growing influence of money in elections.

Speaking at the golden jubilee celebrations of BJP leader and MP Srinivasa Prasad's political journey held here, he said substantial sums, ranging from Rs 100-200 crore, are being spent at each constituency to win elections.

Former chief minister SM Krishna speaks to a gathering, as BJP MP V Srinivas Prasad looks on, in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYASHANKAR S

Centre must prioritise strengthening the Election Commission and implementing measures to combat money power in elections

SM Krishna, Former chief minister

Many appreciate and laud the Indian democratic system, but it is high time to check which way it is heading. Recent developments are disturbing that reveal increased influence of money in politics. It was not the case in the 1960s or 70s when people donated money to politicians to contest elections. Recalling that he saw a bundle of Rs 10,000 for the first time at the Congress office when it was being distributed for elections, he said the poll spending has gone up multiple folds, hijacking the very democratic process. "I don't have that kind of money. I would not have contested elections now," he said.

There is an urgent need for electoral reforms to curb the undue influence of money on voters, he said. He called upon the central government, especially Prime Minister Narendra Modi -- who he said will be reelected for the third time, to prioritise strengthening the Election Commission and implementing measures to combat money power in elections. "He should evolve a strategy to counter it to save the system," he added. Recalling the times of TN Seshan as Election Commissioner, he said politicians feared the officer as he set a cap on expenses and infused integrity into the electoral process.

Krishna recalled how he and then chief minister Devraj Urs hatched a plot to defeat Srinivas Prasad at a prestigious bypoll as Urs, who was just two years into his chief minister's post, wanted to cement his image as a politician who could win elections.

"But we could not get influential leaders and people to work against Prasad as he had the power to attract and organise people," he added. He recounted Prasad's rise to political prominence and his unshakeable support base among the people of Ashokapuram area in Mysuru.

He said elected representatives in the past spoke within the framework of civility, but the language used now mirrors a degradation of values.

HAT IN THE RING

BOMMAI CHALLENGES CONG TO WIN 50 LS SEATS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Haveri

FORMER chief minister Basavaraj Bommai challenged AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi to win at least 50 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. Addressing a party workers' meeting in Hangal in Haveri Lok Sabha constituency here on Sunday, Bommai said the state government has diverted the money earmarked for farmers to guarantees.

"Chief Minister Siddaramaiah makes lengthy speeches. The CM said he will make the caste census report public. Did he do it? The Kantharaj Commission report has been accepted, and people knew that it had been accepted for political gain in view of the polls. But members of the upper castes have opposed the report, which will never be published. The government has been playing hide and seek with regard to the caste issue," he said.

Bommai said it was he who had hiked reservation for SCs and STs. "In a democracy, they can cheat people once, but not always. The BJP too has been in favour of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'. The government has released money to 57 lakh farmers in Karnataka, to the tune of Rs 14,000 crore. The Congress talks of the Anna Bhagya scheme, but has not distributed a single grain of rice to people. The Centre has been giving 5 kg rice to 1 crore families, while 11 lakh houses have been built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Drinking water has been supplied to over 30 lakh households. National Highways had been developed at a rapid pace. The Congress has promised Rs 1 lakh for each woman every year. The guarantees by the Congress are bogus and the party is not sure of even coming back to power, while the BJP will win in more than 400 constituencies," he said.

Former minister CM Udasi has done a lot for Hangal taluk and his work would continue, he said. Stating that there has been zero development in the state, Bommai alleged that Congress leaders and MLAs are scared to go before people.

"No schemes have been drawn with regard to severe drought. Over 800 farmers have ended their lives, and most of their families haven't received compensation. People will give a befitting reply to the Congress in the coming elections. Borrowing Rs 1.5 lakh crore has been the biggest achievement of Siddaramaiah. The people will make Narendra Modi the PM for a third time," he said.

Haveri-Gadag BJP candidate Basavaraj Bommai addresses party workers in Hirekerur of Haveri district on Sunday | EXPRESS

Confident party seniors will convince KSE: Bommai

HUBBALLI: Referring to the recent development of veteran BJP leader KS Eshwarappa intending to contest for the Shivamogga Lok Sabha seat as an independent, former CM Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday said the party's national leaders are in touch with him. "Our national leaders are talking to Eshwarappa, and he will be convinced against taking any drastic decision," opined Bommai. Reacting to BJP colleague Ramesh Jarkiholi's statement on the change of his constituency, Bommai said the former may be in touch with the high command. "But I don't know what Ramesh has said about the change in the constituency. Today, I am campaigning in Shiggaon, which comes under Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency and sitting MP Pralhad Joshi has invited me. This time, Joshi will be given more lead from Shiggaon. The following day, I will be visiting Gadag district that comes under the Haveri Lok Sabha constituency," Bommai said. **ENS**

Modi to address BJP workers in S'mogga today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Shivamogga

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will be visiting Shivamogga on Monday to address a mega gathering of party workers at Allama Prabhu Park. In anticipation of this programme, preparations were in full swing on Sunday.

Modi is expected to arrive at the programme venue at 2 pm and take part in 'Matthomme Modi Sankalpa Samavesha'. "Whole of our Malnad region is super excited and thrilled to witness our dear Prime Minister Narendra Modi and hear his valuable words during his visit to Shivamogga on March 18," BJP state president BY Vijyanendra posted on X.

BJP MLC N Ravikumar said around 2.5 lakh people are expected to participate in the Samavesha. Four Lok Sabha candidates - BY Raghavendra (Shivamogga), Gayathri Siddeshwara (Davanagere), Captain Brijesh Chowta (Dakshina Kannada), and Kota Shrinivas Poojary (Udupi-Chikmagalur) - will attend, alongside senior leaders BS Yediyurappa, Vijayendra, Araga Jnanendra, and others. Raghavendra said JDS workers will also be in attendance.

Meanwhile, the city has been turned into a police fortress ahead of the PM's visit. The state police, as well as paramilitary personnel, have been deployed at the venue, apart from other key locations around the city. The Shivamogga District BJP unit has put up banners and party flags around the city to welcome the PM.

Hubballi residents welcome Union minister Pralhad Joshi, on his arrival, on Sunday | EXPRESS

Joshi steps in to pacify 'sulking' Eshwarappa

HUBBALLI: A day after senior BJP leader KS Eshwarappa announced that he will contest as an independent, several party leaders are now trying to pacify him. In Hubballi, Union minister Pralhad Joshi said that efforts are under way to ensure that Eshwarappa stops rebelling against his own party. Joshi said there is still a long time for the elections, and the party cadre will be able to convince the tall leader. "Eshwarappa is a senior party leader. There is still time for the elections in Shivamogga, which will be held on April 26. We still have 60 days and we are confident that the rebellion will stop," he said. Joshi said that preparations for campaigning ahead of the Lok Sabha polls are under way, and soon a meeting of party workers will be convened. "We have enough time to coordinate with the party workers and we can campaign systematically. Leaders and party workers will coordinate with each other in all the constituencies," Joshi said. **ENS**

Rising temperature has caused a surge in chickenpox cases in Kerala. In the last three months, as many as 6,744 confirmed cases and nine deaths were reported following chickenpox, a summertime infection spread by varicella-zoster virus (VZV)

Chemicals are present all along the food chain, the increasing use of harmful additives, like artificial colours and preservatives, pose a number of health risks for the consumer

COLOURS OF DANGER

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

BIG PICTURE

THE iconic pink hue of cotton candy and enticing red of gobi manchurian will now pale, following the state government's recent ban on artificial colour-enhancing chemicals. While the public speculates about the impact on their favourite dishes, and children mourn the fading pink in their treats, health experts call for a balanced policy framework to educate the public, enforce regulations, and advocate further restrictions on harmful food additives.

An FSSAI official maintained that the regulatory agency carefully selects food samples for inspection, prioritising those lacking proper labelling and those raising surveillance concerns, such as items widely consumed but sold at a lower price, or possessing overly vibrant colours.

Dr US Vishal Rao, member of Vision Group for Biotechnology with the Government of Karnataka, advocated a uniform policy framework. "It is necessary to implement a consistent policy framework that prioritises and maintains food safety standards. Food is universally consumed and if standards are not met, it could lead to a situation where, over the next 10 years, there will be widespread prevalence of non-communicable diseases, including heart disease and kidney disease, affecting a large portion of the population."

"While items are not banned every month, testing undergoes thorough scrutiny to uphold standards set by the FSSAI, and ensure adherence to chemical limits prescribed by the regulating agency," an official from the regulating agency said.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "Food manufacturers should follow Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 and Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations 2011, for their products. Food additives should be within the prescribed limit of Food Safety and Standards and Regulations."

Further, as per the FSSAI order, food manufacturers should test their products once in six months in FSSAI-notified laboratories, and upload the same to the FoSCoS website of the FSSAI, Rao said, adding that the Food Safety and Standards department, from time to time, picks random samples to check the quality of food sold in the market.

If the food sample is not in compliance with the Food Safety Act and regulations, the department initiates legal action, the minister added.

Said Dr Vishal Rao, "From farm to plate, chemicals are present throughout the food supply chain. Initially, raw ingredients are treated with pesticides and then processed through various stages, including adulteration, preservation and eventual decomposition."

Dr Rao added that from pastries to bread, processed meats and carbonated drinks, every food item now contains harmful artificial colours. While candies and pastries boast vibrant hues, bread stays mould-free for extended periods because of added chemicals, colours and the most deadly of all, preservatives. This underscores the necessity for ethically disclosing ingredients in both regulated and unregulated food products, ensuring that consumers understand what they consume, and the associated health risks.

"Consumers should possess the 'Right to Health', necessitating education about the ingredients they consume to make informed decisions about what to include and what to avoid in their diets. Through a comprehensive disclosure of food content, from manufacturers to retailers, all involved parties will exercise greater vigilance, consequently reducing the prevalence of food adulteration practices," Dr Rao said.

Consumers should possess the 'Right to Health', necessitating education about the ingredients they consume to make informed decisions about what to include and what to avoid in their diets

Dinesh Gundu Rao, Health Minister

Additives and health risks

Edwina Raj, head of services, Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics at Aster CMI Hospital, highlighted the presence of chemicals in a variety of commonly consumed products. From preserved meats to soup mixes, bread and spreads, these chemicals are often added and consumed without complete awareness of their potential health effects by consumers.

"It is advisable to familiarise ourselves with the additives present in processed foods, and their possible impacts. Rather than depending solely on packaged foods, let's prioritize fresh unprocessed alternatives. These natural sources offer essential nutrients vital for our well-being, while avoiding artificial additives and preservatives."

Dr Suresh Babu, Professor of Medical Oncology at Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, said, "Clora Red and Brilliant Blue, along with the already prohibited Sunset Yellow and Tartrazine, are frequently used to impart an enticing blue colour to beverages and refreshments, like 'blue lime soda'. Despite potentially allowable usage within defined parameters, regular and prolonged consumption of these chemicals poses health risks over time."

Even staple foods like rice and wheat are sometimes extensively adulterated. For instance, high-quality basmati rice may be mixed with lower-quality long-grain rice to give the impression of superior quality. However, in reality, this exposes them to the risks associated with food adulteration, including kidney diseases and various vitamin deficiencies in the body, Dr Suresh explained.

"Dairy products such as cheese, butter and milk, along with oats, brown rice, dry nuts and black beans, remain untainted by artificial colouring and adulteration. Consumers should prioritize millet and other natural foods over processed options that may contain added preservatives to extend shelf life. While these preservatives prolong the product's lifespan, they can potentially reduce the individual's overall health and longevity."

CHEMICALS & EFFECTS

BUTYLATED HYDROXYANISOLE (BHA) AND BUTYLATED HYDROXYTOLUENE (BHT)

Synthetic antioxidants commonly used as preservatives in a wide range of everyday consumables such as food products, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. However, their usage poses significant risks to human health. BHA has been linked to the development of both benign and malignant tumours, as well as disruptions in hormone function and induced dysfunction within the body. BHT can potentially trigger allergic reactions such as skin rashes, itching or respiratory difficulties.

SODIUM NITRITE / NITRATE

A commonly used salt which is infused in various food products such as bacon, beef jerky, ham, hot dogs and smoked fish. While nitrate is naturally present in our diet, excessive consumption can elevate the risk of colorectal cancer, as well as other diseases, including leukaemia, heart disease, thyroid issues and ovarian cancer.

PROPYL GALLATE

A widely used chemical found in food items such as meat products, mayonnaise, soup mixes, popcorn and chewing gum. Additionally, it serves as an antioxidant in hair products, cosmetics, and lubricants to prevent the oxidation of oils and fats. While generally considered safe for consumption, some individuals may encounter skin rashes, itching, swelling, or respiratory issues upon exposure.

FOODS TO AVOID

■ With elevated salt content such as packaged pickles, marinated fish ■ Designed for prolonged shelf life ■ Ready-to-cook soups ■ Colourful foods ■ Preserved meats

WHAT TO CONSUME

■ Dairy products such as cheese, butter, milk ■ Oats, brown rice, dry nuts, black beans

DMK got Rs 509 crore from Martin's Future Gaming alone

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Chennai

COIMBATORE-based Future Gaming and Hotel Services Limited(FGHSL), owned by Santiago Martin which is the highest buyer of electoral bonds worth Rs 1,368 crore, donated Rs 509 crore to the DMK in Tamil Nadu. This constitutes 37.2% of the group's total purchase of the bonds. Of the Rs 656.50 crore received through electoral bonds, FGHSL alone donated Rs509 crore to the DMK which along with the AIADMK, chose to declare the donors. This was followed by Megha Infrastructure which donated Rs 105 crore. According to their website and X account, Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited constructed a 525 MW thermal plant at Tuticorin for the group company and private thermal generator SEPC Power and integrated it with the grid.

In Tamil Nadu, it is also executing the 500 MW capacity Kundah Hydroelectric Project in the Nilgiris. Even as Martin was the DMK's largest donor, MK Stalin, as the DMK president in 2019, had filed a defamation suit against Vikatan publication for an article that claimed that the party had received Rs 500 crores from Martin for the elections. Apart from Future Gaming, India Cements, Sun network, Thriveni, Ramco Cements and Apollo tyres were among the smaller donors. The AIADMK, in its submission to the ECI vide letter dated November 10, 2023, said the party had received Rs 6.05 crore through electoral bonds for the years 2019-20 to November 2023. Chennai Super Kings Limited donated Rs 5 crore while Gopal Srinivasan donated Rs 5 lakh and Lakshmi Machine Works Limited, Coimbatore Rs 1 crore.

The DMK said the party had not received any contribution above Rs 20,000. According to the submission made by DMK treasurer TR Baalu vide his letter to the ECI dated November 11, 2023, furnished the details of donations received by the party through electoral bonds.From 2019-20 till November 2023, the DMK received Rs 656.50 crore through electoral bonds.

During 2019-20, the DMK received Rs.45.50 crore through electoral bonds and the details are India Cements (Rs 10 crore); LMW (Rs 1.50 crore); Ramco Cements (Rs 5 crore); Mega Infrastructure (Rs 20 crore); Apollo (Rs one crore); Triveni (Rs 5 Crore); Birla (Rs 1 crore); and IRB (Rs 2 crore). During 2020-21, the DMK received Rs 80 crore through electoral bonds and the details are: Future Gaming and Hotel Services Private Limited (Rs.60 crore); and Mega Infrastructure (Rs.20 crore). During 2021-22, the DMK received Rs.306 crore through electoral bonds and the details are Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Limited (Rs 249 crore); Mega Infrastructure (Rs 40 crore); Sun TV Networks Limited (Rs 10 crore); India Cements (Rs 4 crore); and Triveni (Rs 3 crore). During 2022-23, the DMK received 185 crore through electoral bonds from Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Limited (Rs 160 crore); and Mega Infrastructure (Rs 25 crore). From April 1, 2023, till November 14, 2023, the DMK received Rs 40 crore through electoral bonds from Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Limited (Rs 40 lakh).

Electoral bonds: BRS received ₹1,322 crore, YSRCP ₹442 cr

MANDA RAVINDER REDDY
@Hyderabad

THE Bharat Rastra Samithi (BRS) is the biggest beneficiary of electoral bonds among political parties in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. As per the directions of the Supreme Court, the Election Commission of India on Sunday uploaded the details of funds received by parties through electoral bonds.

According to the ECI data, the BRS received ₹1,322.2 crore through 2,188 electoral bonds. From October 10, 2018 to July 25, 2023, it redeemed all the 2,188 bonds. On a single day on April 12, 2022, the pink party redeemed highest number of bonds of 268 worth ₹268 crore, as per the data. Followed by the BRS, the ruling YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh is the second largest beneficiary of the bonds in two states. It raised ₹442.8 crore through 801 electoral bonds from April 12, 2018 to July 17, 2023. YSRCP deposited six bonds worth ₹1.5 crore in its bank account in Bengaluru's SBI main branch. It deposited the remainng bonds in the SBI, Hyderabad. The Opposition party in Andhra Pradesh, Teleugu Desam Party (TDP) received ₹181.35 crore through 324 electoral bonds from November 20, 2018 to July 14, 2023 while its ally Jana Sena Party received ₹4 crore through the electoral bonds. Interestingly, AIMIM did not receive any funds through the electoral bonds. However, the BRS, YSRCP, TDP and Jana Sena Party did not disclose either the details of the donors.

JUMBO'S DAY OUT

A wild tusker ventured into Coimbatore-Siruvani main road, creating panic among motorists and residents in Coimbatore on Sunday | EXPRESS

TN Guv refuses to swear in Ponmudy as minister

ENS @Chennai

TAMIL Nadu Governor RN Ravi on Sunday refused to swear in K Ponmudy as a minister again and sent a letter in this regard to Chief Minister MK Stalin. The CM, on March 13, had requested the governor to swear in Ponmudy as a minister either on March 13 or on March 14 as the Supreme Court had suspended his conviction and sentence in a disproportionate wealth case. However, the governor left for New Delhi on March 14 as per an schedule planned earlier and returned to Chennai on Saturday.

According to sources, the Raj Bhavan sent the letter of the governor to the CM on Sunday evening. In the letter, Ravi said Ponmudy, who was earlier higher education minister, could not be sworn in as the SC had only stayed the conviction. On Saturday, Law Minister S Regupathy had expressed confidence that the governor would fix a date for the swearing-in of Ponmudy as a minister as there is no legal hurdle for that now.

MLA booked for attacking contractor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Tumakuru

TILAK Park police on Saturday booked Gubbi Congress MLA and KSRTC chairman SR Srinivas, for allegedly attacking a Congress leader and Class I civil contractor Rayasandra Ravikumar. Srinivas was accordingly charged under Sections 511, 506, 504, 143, 149, 323, and 363 of the IPC, and the case has been forwarded to the people's representatives' court in Bengaluru, sources said.

The accused MLA, along with 10 of his aides, had forced their way into the PWD office here on Thursday evening, and allegedly beaten up Ravikumar, as he was staging a dharna.

The victim had applied for a tender to implement works in mining areas, under District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds in Gubbi taluk. Though he quoted a low price to implement the cement concrete roads among other works, the concerned officials had allegedly ensured one of the MLA's aides got the tender.

Following this, Ravikumar sat in dharna alone, when the accused attacked him. The suspects also chased him down the street, and he eventually took shelter at the police station, before getting admitted to the district general hospital for treatment. The accused also snatched mobile phones of onlookers, including certain media-persons and also a policeman, who were shooting the incident, according to eyewitnesses.

Ravikumar, who contested the 2018 Assembly polls on a Congress ticket, was defeated. At present, he is a supporter of the Congress Lok Sabha candidate SP Muddahanume Gowda.

EXPRESS READ

Muslim leaders demand change in poll dates in Kerala

Kozhikode: All major Muslim organisations in Kerala urged the Election Commission (EC) not to hold Lok Sabha elections on Friday as it would cause inconvenience to believers. A statement signed by 19 leaders of the organisations, including IUML and Samastha Kerala Jemiyyathul Ulama, pointed out that the first phase of the elections falls on a Friday, April 19. The second phase is on April 26, also a Friday. "The decision will create a difficult situation for Muslims, the largest minority community in the country, to fully take part in the election process in the biggest democracy in the world," the statement said.

Akkai rejects Academy post, seeks MLC or MP position

EXPRESS NEW SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A DAY after her appointment as a member of the Karnataka Sahitya Academy by the state government, well-known transgender activist **Akkai Padmashali** has requested Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar to drop her name from the academy.

Instead, transgender community members should be given representation in the Upper Houses of Karnataka legislature and Parliament, requested Akkai, who is also a Congress member. In her letter, written to the two leaders, she thanked the state government for the honour, but said, "I am known for my fight against social stigma in society for trans community members. My fight will continue against this. I request you (Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar) to drop me from the academy."

She appealed to them to instead nominate her to any of the Upper Houses to let her be part of the process of making laws to fight the stigma against the community. "The state is now witnessing Sarva Janangada Shanthiya Thota, where people from all communities are treated equally. Henceforth, transgender community members should be included in the House" she added.

Post offices now open on Sundays in select cities in Karnataka

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

BOWING to demand from office goers, the Karnataka Postal Circle is mulling opening a select few post offices across the State on Sundays. They will be closed on any other regular working day of the week so that public can have postal services available on all days of the week at some location at least in their cities.

A senior postal official told TNIE, "We have been receiving suggestions from the public to introduce such a step. We have the facility to book articles on Sunday at the GPO alone at Bengaluru. However, financial transactions like cash deposit or withdrawal from savings accounts or booking of money orders is not offered. The public feedback is the need for financial services too in post offices that might work on Sundays and so we are contemplating this move now." This will happen in major cities which already have multiple post offices like Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru and Hubballi among others.

"In Bengaluru, we plan to keep doors open at five post offices on Sunday. One each in the North, South, East and West of the City and one in the central business district is our plan presently. Besides, we plan to close these chosen post offices on Wednesdays," the official added. "The process of identifying the specific post offices across the state is still on. Customers are welcome to send more feedback before we go ahead with the plan," he added.

Karnataka Porcle has been a pioneer in offering innovative facilities for the public, said another official. "Dharwad and Bengaluru have Sanje Anche Kacheris (evening post offices) launched in November 2022 and January 2023 respectively. 'Click and Book' services which permits booking of up to five items online that would be later picked up the delivery staff and the country's first 3D printed post office figure among them," she pointed out.

EDITORIAL

Good intentions alone do not guarantee good outcomes; we need evidence to guide us — Esther Duflo

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

GENERAL ELECTIONS TO TEST ECI CREDIBILITY AS A BIPARTISAN BODY

LEADER of Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury rarely has anything positive to say about the Centre's policy decisions. Like the other day, when he was critical of the haste with which two new election commissioners were appointed. He was part of the skewed collegium to select them and wrote a dissent note complaining he was shown the shortlist of candidates just 10 minutes before the committee met. Yet, Adhir welcomed the staggered seven-phase Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal, hoping it would help create a level-playing field in the state, where goons of the ruling Trinamool Congress are known to terrorise voters. Party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, however, had a different take as he felt the elections spread over 44 days—the second longest in India's history—would give PM Narendra Modi more time to stay on the campaign trail and benefit the BJP while bringing governance to a grinding halt.

On the sudden departure of his colleague Arun Goel, which necessitated the snap appointments, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar was dignified in his response. He described Goel as a distinguished colleague but said everyone should be given their personal space if they so desire. He spoke about the tradition of encouraging dissent within the EC, adding three minds are always better than one. He rounded it off with a Hindi couplet which meant, 'always have people around who challenge your views'. As for J&K, there was clarity that assembly polls couldn't be clubbed with the general elections as it would have required humongous deployment of security forces. Many more candidates enter the assembly poll fray than for the Lok Sabha, and each candidate has to be assigned at least two security personnel in J&K. In Manipur, displaced people would get to exercise their franchise in the special camps they live in.

The CEC claimed robust action would be taken against peddlers of fake news and hate speech. But, how even handed it would be in dealing with such instances across the board remains to be seen. The commission was found wanting in dealing with violations of the Model Code of Conduct in the 2019 general elections, which was why election commissioner Ashok Lavasa had submitted a dissent note. Would the CEC walk the talk of a bipartisan body with a few couplets thrown in between?

THE RIGHT WAY TO FLAG A WRONGDOING

CANADIAN-Indian filmmaker Nisha Pahuja's *To Kill a Tiger* might have missed out on an Oscar but it has certainly sparked a conversation since the documentary's release on an OTT platform this week. The film, shot over three years, offers an intimate view of a family belonging to a tribal community in a Jharkhand village pursuing a legal case after their 13-year-old daughter (name changed to Kiran) is gangraped by three village youth. The film focuses primarily on the child's father and his unflinching support for his daughter's desire to see the POCSO case through despite societal pressures. It offers a poignant insight into his sense of guilt at having 'failed to protect her' while never shaming or castigating his daughter as many in the village—male and female—so easily do. Kiran questions if the violence was her fault because she had been foolish but also wonders how she would tell the man she someday fell in love with about what happened to her. That the child is able to dream of love and marriage even as her community pressures her parents to marry her to one of her rapists is a testament to what a loving and supporting family can offer. While the lack of support can leave scars on the soul of a survivor, Kiran's family shows how love can heal and empower.

As moving as the film may be, it is also troubling on legal and ethical grounds. The film was shot when Kiran was a minor. The filmmaker says when she turned 18, Kiran decided her face could be shown. The POCSO act says a survivor's identity cannot be revealed without a special court's order and only if it is in the child's interest. The law does not speak of Kiran's specific circumstance but within the dynamics of the crew's long-term engagement with the family alongside the NGO supporting them, the mechanisms of consent become complicated. Further, as much as the crew's presence may have protected the family, it clearly contributes to the community's wrath. The film also ends noting the accused had appealed the trial court's conviction, raising concerns if sections of the documentary could hurt the prosecution's case in a higher court. Most concerning is a scene in which the child reads out her statement (to be made in court) explaining the rape in graphic detail—a scene that reads as voyeuristic and unnecessarily sensational.

Well-intentioned as the filmmaker may be, cognisance of the law and power dynamics at play might have better mitigated potential harms and made for a more sensitive film.

QUICK TAKE

BOEING NEEDS TO SOAR AGAIN

THE long-simmering troubles at Boeing, one of the world's two aircraft manufacturing majors, worry fliers around the world. The lid was reopened this January when an emergency door of a 737 Max blew off shortly after takeoff. This month, a US Federal Aviation Administration probe showed multiple lapses in the company's processes. Four in every five commercial planes in India are Boeings or Airbuses, though mostly from their tested lineups of other 737 variants and A320s. We need the US company to shape up, as a monopoly would not help those who want to fly cheaply and safely.

Our country has had the highest real GDP growth across all G20 nations in the first three quarters of FY2024, but does this reflect the status of our human development as well?

INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN INDIA KEY TO VIKSIT BHARAT

DEBOPAM CHAUDHURI — Chief economist, Piramal Enterprises

IT is certainly a great time to be in India for business. A democratic political system, stable governance, liberalized economy, demographic advantage, consumption trends, upgrading infrastructure and a strong financial sector embodied by robust regulators are contributing to India's economic resilience. In an uncertain world, where economists are still grappling with whether the US will experience a soft landing or when China will come out of its current rout, India's growth trajectory is relatively clear. It is well on its path to becoming the third largest economy within 48-54 months, and reaching the $10 trillion target by 2035.

Global confidence in India has been reiterated even by credit rating agencies, despite their reluctance to upgrade its sovereign rating. Over the last few days, agencies like Moody's and Fitch revised their growth forecast upwards. Fitch now expects FY2025 GDP growth to be at 7 percent (from 6.5 percent expectations earlier) and Moody's expects FY2024 economic activity to rise by 6.8 percent (from 6.2 percent expectations earlier). However, these upgrades are yet to be reflected in their rating stance. At BBB-, India is clubbed with smaller nations with either poor debt repayment histories or heavy exposure to foreign debt like Hungary, Greece, Romania and Mauritius. Incidentally, India does not have such problems, and maintains a small current account deficit, a credible fiscal consolidation roadmap and the 5th largest GDP.

One of the major reasons for this upgrade is India's stellar 8 percent+ real GDP growth in the first 3 quarters of FY2024. It has been the highest across all G20 nations, and if the forecasts turn out to be true, it will remain so for the next few years as well. But the question is whether its economic growth is mirrored within its human development indicators as well. Because only if growth and development are in lockstep can a virtuous cycle of sustained advancement be established.

To answer this, let us take a closer look at the latest GDP estimates first. The Central Statistical Office (CSO) estimated that India's real GDP grew 8.4 percent in the Dec '23 quarter, compared to the same time last year. However, at a time when the government estimated a less than expected fiscal deficit in FY2024, and with limited evidence of any material rise in private capex, an 8 percent+ growth rate should appear slightly out of context. The answer lies, as pointed out by some fellow economists, in the rising divergence between Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Value Added (GVA). In simple terms, GDP includes GVA and indirect tax collections (net of food, fertilizer and fuel subsidies). In Q3, there was a slowdown in the government's subsidy spending while GST earnings continued to remain buoyant, leading to a significantly large alpha over and above the GVA in the form of net indirect tax inflows. On an average, in Q3, food subsidies contracted 50 percent compared to the same time last month. At the same time, central GST inflows increased 8 percent. Consequently, GVA, which is a better reflection of actual production across agriculture, industry and services, grew only by 6.5 percent in Q3, compared to 8.4 percent GDP growth. This alpha is technically the government's earning, and will have a positive impact once spent. It will certainly benefit bond yields, but they are not reflective of the gains in Q3.

SOURAV ROY

Now that I have explained that India's actual economic activity may not have increased 8.4 percent, let us expand the GVA to get an indication on real growth. Agriculture, industry (manufacturing + mining) and services are key components of GVA. As per Dec '23 data, agriculture contracted 1 percent (vs 2 percent growth in Q2), industry grew 10 percent (vs 14 percent growth in Q2) and services grew 7 percent (vs 6 percent growth in Q2). The decline in agriculture is particularly worrying, especially because post-Covid, agriculture and public capex were the two pillars supporting the economy. With both on a downward trajectory, services and industry need to step up their growth projectiles to maintain India's overall economic momentum. This means a resuscitation in the private capex cycle has become even more important to replace the shortfall from slowing government expenditure.

Recent media reports have been buzzing with high spending plans from leading corporate houses to this regard. Once larger corporates initiate the capex cycle, smaller players including MSMEs will be automatically crowded in. As a prerequisite, though, our financial system needs to ensure adequate availability of capital and smooth credit flow to the last mile of the economy. It is estimated for a sustained real growth of 8 percent+, credit offtake should grow at 18 percent consistently.

Capital has always been a bottleneck in India's development, owing to a homogenous financial ecosystem over-reliant on banks. Alternative sources of capital like NBFCs and the debt market are also dependent on bank credit. Urgent policy interventions are necessary to break this homogeneity. India's NBFC sector needs to be better utilized. Allowing deposit taking licenses to large and well managed NBFCs (some already have them) can be a solution. Cheap capital through public deposits will lead to lower borrowing costs for NBFC clients, often segments left out by banks, but hold strategic relevance for growth and development.

To conclude, it is necessary to focus on both growth and development. There are vast pockets within India that fall way behind the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) on health, nutrition, education, water resources, financial inclusion, skill development and infrastructure. Economic growth alone may not be sufficient to fill these gaps. The Indian government has chalked out a road map for the 112 Aspirational Districts deemed to be most backward and largely dependent on primitive agriculture. Rapid investments from public and private sectors are necessary to translate India's high growth to meaningful human development. Only then can our Human Development Index rise to levels worthy of a developed nation. Our private sector and financial system should gear up to enable this effort for a more equitable growth benefiting all of India.

(Views are personal)

NAVROZE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF A TRIP TO IRAN

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

NAVROZE falls on March 20 this year. It is the Zoroastrian or Parsi New Year celebrated by various communities around the world then or on successive dates as their New Year, too. Navroze, meaning 'New Day', is based on the Iranian solar calendar, on the spring equinox, which is on or around March 21. The holy book of the Parsis is the *Zend Avesta*, the Creator is 'Ahura Mazda' and their high priests are known as *dastur*. Their threefold path is *Humata*, *Huxta*, *Huvarshta*, meaning good thoughts, good words, good deeds, and respecting nature and protecting water and the environment. There is an emphasis on charity, and men and women are considered spiritually equal. To Parsis, and by association with Parsi friends, to me, Navroze, seems like a forever feeling.

I got a rare chance to visit the original homeland of the Parsis almost 20 years ago with the staunch sisterhood of the Indian Women's Press Corps and Iran refuses to fade from memory. It appears suddenly as a gift of gaz, which is white Isfahani nougat, rose-scented and pista-laden. It glows in the sienna colour of my kelim from Isfahan, in the blue-and-white wall clock made by the fauladgar or ironsmith in Imam Square, and in the photo of Rabindranath Tagore in the tomb keeper's office at the grave of the poet Hafiz in Shiraz.

I took rose and sandalwood-scented incense sticks for Hafiz, out of respect for my then Persian teacher, Dr Yunus Jaffrey of the Walled City of Delhi who taught me some verses from Hafiz. I would go for lessons to his teacher's room in the 17th century Ghaziuddin Madrasa (alas, I have now lost most of what I learnt). When I showed the authorities the incense, they exclaimed "*Oodh*!" I recognised this word because incense sticks are called *oodhvatti* in Tamil.

Iran smelt sweet of apricot wood burning at the last remaining *agiary* or Zoroastrian fire temple in Yazd. I remembered the Parsis and Baha'is I had met over the years, and I honoured the memory of Dr Dastur, the Parsi doctor in Bombay who delivered my siblings into the world. I also thought of nice-looking Parsi classmates from middle school in Mumbai like Darius and Adil whose faces seemed all about me on the streets of Teheran, Shiraz and Isfahan.

We were briefed that we had to "dress modestly" and cover our heads in Iran. So, imagine my chagrin when we landed at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport and I saw beautiful Iranian women, elegant even in acutely modest close-fitting coats called *manteau* by the French word. I, on the other hand, in a long, shapeless Fabindia kurta, dupatta sliding all over my head since I am not from a *purdah* culture, looked like a frump. I am unlikely to ever return to Iran since I am wholly averse to mandatory hijab and *ghunghat*.

But the warmth and affection we encountered at every turn from everyday Iranians, made up somewhat for the torture of having to keep my head covered. "Pakistan?" they'd say, since we wore salwar-kameez. "Hindustan," we'd answer at once. Huge smiles and cries of *Khushamadeed* ("Welcome!") promptly lit their faces. They treated the non-vegetarians to *fesanjan*, a curry of chicken cooked in pomegranate juice and walnuts. Its cousin back home was *jardaloo salli boti*. The *jardaloo* were apricots, the salli were delicate, crunchy potato straws and the *boti* were chunks of mutton. It was a classic Parsi dish featuring dried fruit, Iranian-style. Iran was so *humvatan* or homeland. In fact, one of the quirkiest aspects of having been neighbours for millennia was to discover that you couldn't have a private Hindi conversation in Iran. The taxi driver understood many keywords, which were Persian. Few words were needed though at Persepolis, when the dignified keeper of the site watched me stare up at the ruins of the library. Persepolis is so grand and beautiful, especially Apadana Palace, built by the Achaemenid king Darius and finished by King Xerxes. What a civilization to boast of, those winged lion pillars that influenced our own emblem, the Ashokan lion capital. Reflexively, I thought of a building on the Mahalakshmi end of Pedder Road, Mumbai, called 'Persepolis' and turned to smile at the Iranian gentleman by my side.

AFP

> Iran was so *humvatan* or homeland. In fact, one of the quirkiest aspects of having been neighbours for millennia was to discover that you couldn't have a private Hindi conversation in Iran. The taxi driver understood many keywords, which were Persian

"He burnt it," he said, just like that, without preamble, and I nodded, not needing an explanation. It was an 'old universe' moment, people from two ancient civilizations recalling something that had happened to both, in this case someone called Alexander of Macedonia, between 331 and 325 BCE.

How old our memories are, across the East. Especially the ancient racial memory of the spring equinox that became a collective cultural instinct called Navroze. It is "as old as spring", this marrow-deep memory that stirs us even in our neon world of today, of how our old civilizations celebrated the end of the old year, based on the advent of spring. They wore bright colours (or threw them about), wished each other well and gathered around a bonfire, that many in India call *Holi ka Dahan*. Holi, by the way, falls on March 25 this year. They did so to symbolically burn the sorrows of the past year, to renew their earthly span with a fresh expression of faith in the Creator, in the forces of good, and in their better selves. No more than that, but certainly no less, for they honoured, and still do, the cycle of seasons attributed to a greater Power, who caused the skies to rain and the earth to be filled with fruit, grain and meat.

As Navroze dawns again in India, it's "Happy New Year" to all my fellow Indians, for it will soon be 'Navroze' for others, too, up and down the land, be it as Yugadi, Gudi Padva, Vishu, Bihu and more. And let us also remember that in mid-April, right around Baisakhi, it's Songkran (Sankaranti) in Thailand. But then, the East, perhaps unrealised by us, spans a very deep, long swathe.

(Views are personal)
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MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Weak Opposition

Ref: *Between continuity and loose change?* (March 17). The cracks in the Opposition camp are clearly visible. The disputes over seat sharing hurt the spirit of unity and sacrifice needed to tackle the common enemy. In the meantime, the Congress, the biggest party in the bloc, is yet to prove that it can be a credible alternative to the BJP.
R Sridharan, Chennai

Advantage NDA

If results of the last five Assembly elections are any indication, the BJP is looking strong. Moreover, the recent consecration of the Ram Temple has further bolstered the position of the BJP. The INDIA bloc is looking weak at the moment. I feel it is in no position to give a great fight to the NDA, which looks all set to win a third term.
Hemanth D Pai, Bengaluru

Monitor closely

Ref: *7-phase LS polls start from April 19, counting on June 4* (March 17). Conducting a general election in India is no small task, given the sheer size of the country both in terms of population and territory. That the Election Commission has decided to hold them in seven phases is welcome. The poll panel should keep a close watch on candidates for any violation of rules. It must work to ensure that there is a level-playing field for all parties and independent candidates.
S Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai

Long process

The seven-phase election will be spread over 46 days from April 19 when the voting begins to June 4 when the counting begins. We are living in the digital era where everything has become fast-paced. And unlike some western countries, we use electronic voting machines. Why then are we having a long election process as though we are living in the 1950s?
T Kailash Ditya, Hyderabad

Change needed

At a time when the idea of 'One Nation, One Election' is gaining currency, it is disappointing that the Lok Sabha elections are going to be conducted over seven phases. Our inability to conduct elections in shorter stretch is worrying, especially given our ruling party wastes no opportunity to highlight the digital transformations that it has unleashed.
M Rishidev, Dindigul

High-octane clash

Ref: *Sen-sational run ends* (March 17). Shuttler Lakshya Sen deserves praise for putting up a strong fight against Indonesia's Jonatan Christie. Both players packed a punch in a high-octane contest. One hopes Lakshya secures a berth for the Paris Olympics.
N J Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Sitaram Yechury @SitaramYechury
As the news of the details of the electoral bonds and legalised political corruption pour out, the quid pro quo is clearly established.

Asaduddin Owaisi @asadowaisi
What a shame. When your devotion only come out when Muslims peacefully practice their religion. What is this, if not mass radicalisation?

Tejashwi Yadav @yadavtejashwi
Was any paper leaked in our 17 months? It is amazing that as soon as the government changes, answers are written on the back of the admit card.

Counting date for Arunachal, Sikkim changed to June 2

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) on Sunday announced changing the date of counting of votes in the Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim Assembly polls from June 4 to June 2. The rest of the schedule for the polling process in the two states would remain unchanged.

The poll panel in an official statement said that the decision to change the date was taken as the term of the two assemblies is till June 2 and the elections have to be wrapped up on or before that date. It said, "There shall be no change in respect of schedule for Parliamentary constituencies of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim."

"The EC is to conduct election to Legislative Assemblies of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim before the cessation of their terms, in exercise of the powers conferred upon under Article 324 read with Article 172(1) of the Constitution of India and Section 15 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The term of house of both the Legislative Assemblies of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim is due to expire on 02.06.2024," read the statement.

The date of counting of votes was changed from June 4 to June 2 and the date before which the election shall be completed was also changed from June 6 to June 2. The two states go to polls on April 19.

"There shall be no change in respect of Schedule for Parliamentary Constituencies of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim," the poll panel said, adding that counting for the Lok Sabha seats and Andhra Pradesh and Odisha Assembly polls will be held on June 4. The term of the Lok Sabha is till June 16.

The EC had announced earlier that the votes polled in the two assembly elections were to be counted on June 4 along with Lok Sabha poll votes.

App to check criminal records of candidates

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a new mobile application to help voters check whether any candidate standing for Lok Sabha elections in their constituency has a criminal record. It said that the App – 'Know Your Candidate' (KYC) - is available on Android and iOS. The announcement about the application was made by the Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Saturday.

Draft 100-day road map for new govt, ministers told

At cabinet meet, Modi talks of making India third-largest economy

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

A day after the Lok Sabha poll dates were announced, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is learnt to have asked his ministerial colleagues at a cabinet meeting to be ready with a roadmap of development works for 100 days as part of a plan for the next five years.

Sources said the PM is determined to meet his target of making the country the world's third-largest economy in the next five years. "In clear signs of emerging confidence in favourable poll results, the PM does not want to lose even a day after the government at the Centre is formed for a third term in implementing the 100-day roadmap," said a source.

Modi chaired the Cabinet meeting on Sunday and enquired about the progress of development works. He also reportedly directed officials to keep up the tempo of team work on development works.

He discussed with the secretaries and other officials on how the agenda for the first 100 days and the next five years could be taken forward ahead without a halt. Sources said the roadmap for "Viksit Bharat" was a result of more than two years of intensive preparations and entailed a "whole-of-government" approach involving all ministries. Wide-ranging consultations with governments, academia, the civil society, and scientific organisations and mobilisation of youths for inputs would go into meeting the set targets.

"To date (before the announcement of the general election), as many as 2,700 meetings, workshops and seminars have been conducted at various levels and more than 20 lakh suggestions were received from the youth", said a source.

Meanwhile, sources said the that government has reportedly initiated the process of notifying the dates of the 7-phase Lok Sabha elections by sending the Election Commission's recommendation to President Droupadi Murmu.

The first notification on LS polls is expected on March 20 for the first phase of polls, which is due on April 19 for 102 LS seats. The nomination process begins for a particular phase with the issuance of the notification as per the rules.

Going by the book, the Cabinet recommended to the President to issue the notifications for the different phases after the EC sent the mandatory recommendation to the Union Law Ministry to notify the Lok Sabha election dates.

Citing rules, sources said: "Under Section 14 (2) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the EC sends its recommendation to the government which requests the President to clear the notification of the poll dates. Based on the recommendation, the Law Ministry prepares a proposal for the Union Cabinet, which recommends to the President to approve the issuance of notifications for the different phases."

POWER GAMES

SHAHID FARIDI
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Follow him on X@Shahid_Faridi_

Star Power

FILM STAR RANDEEP HOODA SPURNS BJP OVERTURES

The ruling BJP is scrambling for the right candidates in Haryana for the Lok Sabha elections. The party is trying hard to convince film star Randeep Hooda to fight the election on its ticket from Rohtak constituency, which is considered a stronghold of state Congress stalwart Bhupinder Singh Hooda. The party's central leadership wants to shift its sitting MP Arvind Sharma to the neighbouring Sonipat as internal surveys have shown that he may lose from Rohtak. He had won the last election by a narrow margin. The BJP MP from Sonipat has got embroiled in a sex scandal and may not be renominated for the seat. Sources said party leaders zeroed in on Randeep Hooda, who belongs to the Jat community, to replace Arvind Sharma in Rohtak. Before resigning as the chief minister, Manohar Lal Khattar spoke twice with Randeep and requested him to contest the election. But Randeep has refused saying he has no interest in politics and wants to concentrate on his career in films. The party then asked BJP in charge of Haryana Biplab Deb to speak to him. But even he could not get the actor to change his mind. Randeep's mother Asha Hooda lives in Gurgaon and is associated with the BJP. She is known to BJP leader Sudha Yadav, who was recently inducted into the party's central parliamentary board. Sources said that after the chief minister and the party in charge of Haryana failed to persuade Randeep, Sudha took it upon herself to bring him around. She met Randeep's parents and told them that fighting election on a BJP ticket could make their son a bigger star and put his life on a better course. According to sources, even his parents have failed to get the actor to accept the BJP's offer.

Haryana Hustle

HOODA TRIES TO KILL 3 BIRDS WITH ONE STONE

Haryana Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda is planning to completely sideline his opponents within the party in the current Lok Sabha elections. He has tactically proposed the name of film star Raj Babbar for the Gurgaon Lok Sabha seat, which is currently held by Rao Inderjit Singh of the BJP. According to sources, by proposing Babbar's name, Hooda aims to achieve three objectives. One, deny the Gurgaon seat to his party adversary Captain Ajay Yadav. Two, take away the Bhiwani-Mahendragarh constituency from former chief minister Bansi Lal's family. Bansi Lal's daughter-in-law Kiran Chawdhary is an MLA from one of the assembly constituencies of Bhiwani and her daughter Shruti Chowdhary has contested from the Lok Sabha constituency in the last three elections. Bhiwani Lok Sabha constituency has the second-largest Yadav population after Gurgaon. Hooda plans to give the seat to his supporter from the Yadav community, Rao Dan Singh, to compensate the Yadav community for the loss of Gurgaon. Hooda-Kiran rivalry is part of the state's political folklore. Kiran belongs to an anti-Hooda group widely referred to as 'SRK', which stands for (Kumari) Selja, Randeep (Surjewala) and Kiran. Once Bhiwani seat, considered one of the four Jat constituencies of the state (the other three being Rohtak, Sonipat and Hissar) is given to a Yadav, a Jat candidate will have to be accommodated in another constituency. This is where Hooda plans to achieve his third objective. He wants to field his relative Karan Dalal, a Jat, from the Faridabad seat. However, there is a hitch. Raj Babbar does not want to contest from Gurgaon. He is interested in fighting from Mumbai North-west constituency, which was earlier represented by actor Sunil Dutt. The Congress central leadership also does not appear inclined to force Babbar to fight from Gurgaon. As a result, the party may field Rao Dan Singh against Rao Inderjit Singh from Gurgaon and the Bansi Lal family may be able to retain Bhiwani. Hooda may find it difficult to swing even the Faridabad seat for Karan Dalal.

Electoral bonds an experiment, time will tell how beneficial it was: RSS

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

AMID a row over the electoral bonds, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Sunday said the system was introduced as an experiment with checks and balances.

"We the Sangh perceive the electoral bond as an experiment. It has been introduced with checks and balances... it has not come suddenly," said **Dattatreya Hosabale** after being re-elected as the general secretary of the RSS, considered the ideological mentor of the BJP.

His statement came after the electoral bonds were brought to public domain by the Election Commission following the Supreme Court's directive.

"Whenever new thing comes, questions arise in the minds of people. Time will tell how beneficial and effective the (electoral bond) system is," Hosabale told reporters at Nagpur on the last day of Sangh's annual Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha. He said that when the electronic voting machines (EVMs) were introduced, such questions were also raised.

Replying to a question on the Sangh's outreach to minority communities, Hosabale said, "RSS is opposed to the 'politics of minorityism'. For us, everyone is equal and of one nation and one family."

Hosabale added, "I think the concept of minority in the Indian Constitution ought to be revisited."

Sangh holds that irrespective of one's religion, no one should be seen through the prism of 'majority ' or 'minority'. "In India, Muslims and Christians are considered minorities but the Sangh has been trying to have dialogue with them. Within the Sangh, there are many from the minorities but the Sangh does not popularise it as a show piece," Hosabale said.

He said that some "separatist terrorists" in Punjab were active on the pretext of farmers' agitation. On Manipur issue, he said the Sangh is working to heal the wounds created after violence with people of Kukis and Meiteis.

He said the Sangh is engaging its functionaries to promote 100 per cent voting by creating awareness about the right to vote. "The Sangh is not an organisation of a society but an organisation of the whole society. There should be no animosity, separation and disunity or anything contrary to unity in the society," he said.

On UCC, he said it has been implemented in Uttarakhand but the Sangh wants it across the country.

Asked about the Sangh's stand on the disputes pertaining to places of worship at Mathura and Kashi, he said, "What was done for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement should not be done for everything. The matter (Mathura and Kashi issues) is in court. If it is resolved by the court, then there is no need for agitation."

Plea seeks disclosure of electoral bonds sold from March '18 to April '19

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

A fresh plea has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the State Bank of India (SBI), to disclose the details of the Electoral Bonds (EBs) sold and redeemed from March 1, 2018, to April 11, 2019.

An NGO, Citizen's Rights Trust (CRT), moved the court despite the SC in its landmark judgment on February 15 holding that the Electoral bonds scheme has to be struck down as unconstitutional, and it directed the SBI to stop issuing bonds immediately.

In its petition, the NGO said the voters are entitled to know the funding to political parties for the period from between March 1, 2018 and April 11, 2019. A total of 9,159 bonds worth ₹4,002 crore were sold between March 2018 to April 2019 which should be disclosed, it said. "The people deserve to know who bought them," it read.

It pointed out that at present, the data available on the platform of the Election Commission of India (ECI) represents only 76% of the total EBs and the voters are not aware of the details of the remaining 24 per cent of the EBs. "Therefore the SC should pass appropriate orders, directions and or verdict to the respective parties in this regard," the application read.

The petition sought a direction to the SBI to share the details of electoral bonds sold and redeemed from March 1, 2018, to April 11, 2019, including the alphanumeric number, date of purchase, denomination, names of donors and parties to the ECI.

'Electoral bond nothing other than cut money'

West Bengal CPI(M) described electoral bond as 'cut money' at national level to extort money by political parties such as BJP and TMC. CPI(M)'s politburo member Mohammad Selim on Sunday said that the TMC has introduced cut-money system to extort money in the state which has turned out to be electoral bond at the national level.

Army to conduct 10-day exercise in Seychelles

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

A military exercise with Seychelles defence forces will begin from March 18.

IN tune with the country's initiatives focused on improving bilateral military ties with the Indian Ocean island-nations, an Indian Army contingent left for Seychelles on Sunday to carry out a joint military exercise 'LAMITIYE-2024' with the Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF).

The Indian Army in a statement said the 10-day exercise will begin from March 18. A contingent of 45 personnel from Gorkha Rifles will join the SDF for the exercise.

The Seychelles is a strategically located archipelago of around 115 islands in the Indian Ocean region and India has been focusing on significantly ramping up defence cooperation with the country.

The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability in sub-conventional operations in semi-urban environments under Chapter VII of the United Nations charter on peacekeeping operations. "The exercise will also build and promote bilateral military relations in addition to exchanging skills, experiences and good practices between both armies," an Indian Army said.

'LAMITIYE' meaning 'friendship' in the Creole language is a biennial training event and has been conducted in Seychelles since 2001. This will be the tenth in a series.

Both sides will jointly train, plan and execute a series of well-developed tactical drills for neutralization of likely threats that may be encountered in a semi-urban environment, while exploiting and showcasing new-generation equipment and technology. The joint exercise will include field training exercise, combat discussions and lectures and demonstrations. It will culminate with two days of 'Validation Exercise.'

The exercise, as per the Army, "will contribute immensely to developing mutual understanding and magnifying jointness between the troops of both the armies. It will also foster collaborative partnership and help in sharing best practices between the two sides."

The two countries share good relations with India helping in developing an airstrip and a jetty on the Assumption Islands. Meanwhile, China has been proactively taking initiatives to develop infrastructure in the region.

The significance of Seychelles and other island nations can be understood keeping in mind the recent spree of hijack attempts and drone attacks, raising concerns over the seaborne trade which is significant for India.

India in recent years extended support to its neighbouring countries, including those in the Indian Ocean, as the first responder. Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff, recently said, "A country's growth is connected to exports through the seas, and with 95 per cent of India's trade by volume and 68 per cent by value transiting upon the seas, the livelihood of every citizen is linked with the seas."

Located at the crossroads of Africa, West Asia and India, Seychelles possesses outsized geostrategic importance despite its small landmass of just 452 sq km and a population of about 98,000. Since the Cold War, Seychelles has been a strategic destination for several major powers with vested interests in the region. Its geostrategic importance remains undiminished in contemporary times.

India, Maldives hold 3rd group meeting in Male, discuss bilateral cooperation

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE third meeting of the India-Maldives high-level core group on Sunday reviewed the ongoing deputation of Indian technical personnel to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms in the island nation.

"During the meeting, both sides reviewed the ongoing deputation of Indian technical personnel to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms that provide humanitarian and medvac services to the people of the Maldives," according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

They held their discussions on wide ranging issues related to bilateral cooperation. This inter alia, included expediting the implementation of ongoing development cooperation projects through regular convening of joint monitoring mechanisms, efforts to boost bilateral trade and investment and enhancing people-to-people linkages through capacity building and travel.

The fourth meeting will be held in Delhi on a mutually convenient date. Earlier this month, Maldivian President **Mohamed Muizzu** had stated that all Indian troops in the Maldives would have to leave by May 10. The demand was made after a batch of Indian civilians had replaced helicopter crew in the island nation.

On March 4, while addressing a residential committee in the island of Eydhafushi, Muizzu had said that no Indian soldiers whether in uniform or civilian clothes would be allowed to stay in the Maldives beyond the May deadline. It may be recalled that sending back Indian troops (who are primarily deployed to manage two Dornier aircraft and one helicopter which are used for medvac and humanitarian operations) was on his election agenda and he had said that he would fulfil this within 100 days of his assuming charge as President.

There have been varying reports on the number of Indian military personnel in the Maldives as most point out to 33 but some even suggest they could be over 85 in number.

On February 27, India had sent a team of civilian technical staff to replace the military personnel attached with a helicopter in Addu.

Notably, the first core level meeting took place in Male on January 14, while New Delhi played host to the second.

One of India's key maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean Region and the overall bilateral ties, including in areas of defence and security, the Maldives witnessed an upward trajectory under the previous government in Male.

GUNS

District Election Officer, Bandipora, J&K, Shakeel ul Rehman, on Sunday directed all licensed arms holders to deposit their arms at the nearest police stations within seven days in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

5 COPS SUSPENDED FOR SWITCHING VEHICLE SEIZED IN ACCIDENT

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	35	21	Mumbai	32	24
Bhopal	32	19	Panaji	33	23
Jaipur	31	19	Patna	33	21
Amritsar	31	13	Lucknow	32	15
Chennai	31	27	Port Blair	31	26
Kolkata	29	24	Imphal	29	15
Srinagar	15	03	Chandigarh	31	15

Bihar NDA, grand alliance scramble to finalise seats

BJP may repeat 2019 formula; RJD and Congress yet to begin talks

RAMSHANKAR @ Patna

NDA faces standoff between Paras and Chirag

NDA is facing a standoff between Paras and his nephew Chirag over Hajipur seat. Paras has expressed his displeasure over Chirag being given preference in the NDA, saying his party's options were open if not given due respect in seat-sharing.

BIHAR's National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and Grand Alliance (GA) are striving hard to finalise the seat-sharing arrangements for the Lok Sabha elections. Chief minister Nitish Kumar held discussions with former JD(U) president Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Kumar Jha on Sunday to finalise the party's seat-sharing formula and discuss about candidates.

"Which party will contest how many seats and also on which seats would be made public soon," Jha said.

NDA in Bihar comprises BJP, JD (U), Chirag Paswan's LJP (Ram Vilas), union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras's Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP), former CM Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and former union minister Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM).

Sources claimed that BJP would contest on 17 seats, JD (U) on 16 seats, LJP (Ram Vilas) on five and HAM and RLM on one each. RLJP has been offered a Rajya Sabha seat and a cabinet berth in Nitish government.

In 2019, NDA had won 39 out of the state's 40 Lok Sabha seats. While BJP had won 17 seats, JD(U) 16 and united LJP six. This time NDA is facing a standoff between Paras and his nephew Chirag over Hajipur seat. Paras has expressed his displeasure over Chirag being given preference in the NDA, saying his party's options were open if not given due respect in seat-sharing. The RJD and Congress, two major constituents of GA, will hold a meeting in Delhi on Monday to finalise a seat-sharing deal. GA comprises RJD, Congress, CPI-ML, CPI, and CPM .

Sources claimed RJD would contest on 28 seats, Congress on nine, CPI-ML on two and CPI on one. In 2019, only Congress had won Kishanganj seat. Meanwhile, RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav said Bihar would spring a surprise in 2024 Lok Sabha election.

"There is an undercurrent in favour of Grand Alliance in Bihar," he said.

J'khand ruling alliance awaits Rahul's final nod

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

EVEN after BJP has already announced names of most of its candidate for 2024 Lok Sabha Polls in Jharkhand, INDI Alliance has not announced even a single name for the same.

According to leaders in the ruling alliance, they have been waiting for former Congress President Rahul Gandhi's nod to finalise the names of candidates. BJP has announced names of 11 out of 14 Lok Sabha candidates in Jharkhand, but seat sharing is still not completed in the INDI Alliance.

Sources in the ruling alliance, however, said to have agreed on 7-5-1-1 formula in Jharkhand, where the Congress will contest on seven seats, JMM on 5 while the RJD and left will be given one seat each from JMM quota, but they are yet to announce it formally.

Meanwhile, CM Champai Soren, Kalpana Soren and JMM General Secretary Supriyo Bhattacharya left for Mumbai on Tuesday to attend the concluding ceremony of the Yatra. Party insiders informed that the JMM leaders would discuss seat sharing for Lok Sabha elections during the programme with the senior Congress leaders. The names will be announced latest by Monday evening or Tuesday afternoon.

Art 370 abrogation emerges as main poll plank in J&K

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THE Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir would be fought on Article 370 with both the BJP and opposition parties to focus their poll campaigning in the Union Territory on the Article 370, which granted special status to the region.

Jammu and Kashmir would witness five phase polling for five Lok Sabha seats. The Udhampur LS seat would go to polls on April 19, Jammu constituency on April 26, Anantnag-Rajouri seat on May 7, Srinagar constituency on May 13 and Baramulla seat on May 26.

It is the first parliamentary polls to be held in Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A and bifurcation of erstwhile J&K state into two Union Territories (UTs) by centre on August 5, 2019.

While the dominant sentiment in Kashmir still vouches for Article 370, in Jammu citizens have shown mixed feelings with some sections supporting abrogation of J&K's special status and others not doing so.

A BJP leader said since it is the first LS polls to be held after Article 370 abrogation, the main plank of the party during the campaigning would be Article 370 repeal and its positive impact on the state.

He said the Article 370 repeal has opened the path of development in Jammu and Kashmir and hundreds of developmental works and projects have been taken up since August 2019.

"There is peace in the region, which has led to the flourishing of the tourism sector. Over 2 crore tourists visited J&K last year, which is a record. It has opened doors for investment and also provided empowerment of economically backward classes and West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs), who were being treated as B-category citizens in J&K before Article 370 repeal," the BJP leader said.

Focus on development

A BJP leader said the Article 370 repeal has opened the path of development where hundreds pf projects have been taken up since August 2019. The party during the campaigning would focus on Article 370 repeal and its positive impact on the state.

KOLKATA DIARY

PRANAB MONDAL
Our correspondent in West Bengal
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Exhibition marks 250 years of postal system

The city witnessed a week-long celebration to mark the 250th anniversary of the General Post Office (GPO) with the inauguration on the "Journey of Mail" by governor CV Ananda Bose. In the exhibition, history of India's postal system and the GPO itself was traced through stamps. Chief postmaster general, Bengal circle, Niraj Kumar spoke of the journey since the time of Warren Hastings in 1774. "We expand our network through new modes transportation, like the railway mail service in 1853. Postage stamps as tokens of advance payment started in 1854, money order in 1872 and postal life insurance in 1884," he said. There will be a mobile exhibition on a tram and a heritage walk.

Hawkers asked not to set up stalls around KMC

The town vending committee of the civic body decided that hawkers will not be allowed to set up stalls surrounding Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters, but those with stalls on the pavements won't have to move. The decision will not impact hawkers occupying pavements but they have to remain within one-third of the width of the sidewalks, said a KMC source. The KMC headquarters has SN Banerjee Road to its north, Charlie Chaplin Square to its south, Bertram Street to its east and Hogg Street to its West. Members of the town vending panel include hawkers, government officials, police, shop owners and NGO representatives.

Kolkata hospital to treat rare lung disease

Apollo Multispeciality Hospital, Kolkata, announced the launch of a dedicated clinic to treat interstitial lung disease (ILD). "ILD is a broad group of uncommon conditions of the lungs . Incessant cough and progressively worsening breathlessness are the most common symptoms. It can be mildly symptomatic and may improve with simple measures like smoking cessation, or it may be progressive with ever-worsening symptoms," said a communication from the healthcare unit. The ILD management programme at the clinic will focus on symptom relief, slowing of the progression of the disease and enhancing the overall quality of life, said an official.

Sukhu-led govt survival depends on by-elections to be held with LS polls

HARPREET BAJWA @Chandigarh

THE fate of the 15-month-old Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu-led Congress government in Himachal Pradesh now depends on the outcome of the assembly bypolls to the six seats.

According to the Election Commission of India (ECI), voting for the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls will be held simultaneously on June 1.

On Saturday, the ECI announced simultaneous bypolls in the six assembly segments of Dharamsala in Kangra, Sujanpur and Barsar in Hamirpur, Gagret in Una, Kutlehar and Lahaul-Spiti.

The bye-elections were necessitated following the disqualification of six MLAs -- Sudhir Sharma from Dharamsala, Rajinder Rana from Sujanpur, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal from Barsar, Ravi Thakur from Lahaul-Spiti, Chaitnaya Sharma from Gagret and Devender Bhutto from Kutlehar.

With the Congress's strength in the state assembly being reduced to 34, it will require two more seats to save its government from collapsing.

As the BJP has 25 MLAs, the support of three Independent MLAs — Hoshiyar Singh from Dehra, KL Thakur from Nalagarh and Ashish Sharma from Hamirpur – is a must to win all the six seats.

SC to take up plea against House Speaker

Supreme Court will on Monday take up a plea filed by six disqualified Himachal Pradesh rebel Congress MLAs challenging state assembly Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania's February 29 decision to disqualify them under the anti-defection law.

If the BJP wins all the six seats, its strength in the assembly will rise to 31 and with three independents on its side, the total number will be 34:34.

Thus, the Congress is set to focus more on the assembly bypoll as its result will determine its government's survival than winning any of the four Lok Sabha seats.

After the ECI announced the poll dates, the mercury in the political barometer has shot up with both ruling Congress and BJP putting in all their might to win the maximum number of seats.

Sources said that possibility of BJP giving a ticket to Congress rebel MLA Sudhir Sharma from the Kangra Lok Sabha seat cannot be ruled out. SC will on Monday take up a plea filed by six disqualified HP rebel Congress MLAs challenging state assembly Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania's decision to disqualify them under anti-defection law.

Kejriwal gets 2 ED summonses in separate cases

UJWAL JALALI @ New Delhi

THE ED on Sunday issued two fresh summons to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal regarding two separate cases — the now scrapped excise policy case and another related to a case linked to the corruption in Delhi Jal Board.

The AAP supremo has been asked to depose before the central agency at its office here on March 18 to record his statement under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the DJB case while three days later, i.e. on March 21, he has been summoned in the liquor policy case. This is the first summon in the water department case that has been sent to Kejriwal while the ED called him for the ninth time in the liquor policy case.

Reacting sharply over the development, the Aam Aadmi Party accused BJP of running an "extortion racket" through probe agencies and said the sole aim of BJP is to arrest Arvind Kejriwal.

Delhi Minister Atishi, in a press conference, said that CM Kejriwal appeared personally in the Rouse Avenue Court on Saturday which granted him bail, and now there will be argument in the court regarding the legitimacy of the summons. "However, without awaiting the court's decision, the BJP's ED has sent summons to CM in alleged liquor scam case and in a fake DJB case," she said.

Minister among five charged by Raj anti-corruption court in 18-yr-old case

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

A special court dealing with anti-corruption cases in Rajasthan's Jaipur region has formally charged five individuals, including Urban Development and Housing (UDH) Minister **Jhabar Singh Kharra** and former development officer Ummed Singh Rao, with corruption amounting to ₹14 lakh rupees and fraud in an 18-year-old case involving the procurement of pipes within the Public Health Engineering Department.

Kharra held the position of the head of Shrimadhopur Panchayat Samiti at the time of the alleged offences

According to Judge Brijesh Kumar of the ACB Court, Jhabar Singh Kharra, along with co-accused Krishna Kumar Gupta and Nehru Lal, allegedly convened a meeting of the Panchayat Committee to propose the supply of drinking water, purportedly as part of a criminal conspiracy.

Subsequently, they are accused of colluding with tender participant Bhairuram to manipulate the tender process, despite Bhairuram's purported lack of authorisation as a PVC pipe contractor and experience in such work.

The court's order highlighted that the Panchayat Samiti paid ₹27,38,477 to Bhairuram for the purchase of pipes, while investigations indicate that he procured the pipes for ₹13,24,339.

The case

- Accused proposed the supply of drinking water, as part of a criminal conspiracy
- They colluded with tender participant to manipulate the tender process, despite lack of authorisation
- Panchayat paid ₹27,38,477 to the tender participant, of which ₹13,24,339 was used. It resulted in loss to exchequer - a violation of the Prevention of Corruption Act

This apparent discrepancy purportedly resulted in a loss of ₹14,14,078 to the exchequer, constituting a violation of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 120 of the Indian Penal Code.

Additionally, the court noted the use of fake documents in the tender process, constituting fraud. An aspect of surprise emerged as it was revealed that M/s Badhala Construction Company, the entity to which the tender was awarded, was not registered with the water supply department.

Furthermore, the committee involved in the pipeline procurement failed to specify the quantity of pipes to be purchased, with no record of the quantity at the departmental level.

The investigation conducted by the ACB revealed violations of tender rules, including the filling of three tender forms by the same entity. Moreover, the rates fixed by participating companies in the tender process were allegedly not documented in government records.

After the formation of the Bhajanlal government in December 2023, Kharra had been tipped as cabinet minister of the high profile UDH department. With charges now framed, the trial proceedings against Minister Kharra and the other accused individuals are set to commence.

The court will oversee the trial, where arguments from both sides will be presented, leading to a final decision upon the trial's conclusion.

However, the accused, including Minister Kharra, retain the right to challenge the lower court's decision by filing a revision in the High Court. Any stay granted by the High Court on the ACB court's decision would temporarily halt the proceedings.

Rats pose risk of wall cave-in along Naini Lake shores

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

NAINITAL Lake is facing a unique threat from rats. In the Mallital area of Nainital, rats are not only gnawing at the walls near the lake, but also undermining their structural integrity by burrowing into them. The Irrigation Department has taken immediate action to address this issue.

According to sources, in view of the high risk of potential wall collapse along the lakeshore, the department has swung into action. In the picturesque hill station, the area from Mallital to places like Boat House Club, Pant Park, and Band Stand up to Capital Cinema is bordered by the Naini Lake. Walls built along the lake shore years ago, have been deteriorating. Rats have created burrows within the walls and surrounding areas.

Uproar over paper leak of J'khand civil service exams

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

THE candidates for Jharkhand Public Services Commission (JPSC) Civil Services (PT) Examination alleged paper leak ahead of the examination at Chatra, Dhanbad and Jamtara.

A video footage of candidates, allegedly filling up their OMR sheets sitting on the floor outside their examination halls in Jamtara also went viral on social media. Candidates appearing for the examination also protested in Chatra and Dhanbad alleging that the seal of the question papers brought to them were already broken. Many of the candidates also alleged mismatch in the number of their OMR sheets and question papers.

Principal of the Upendra Nath Verma Inter College in Chatra, however, has denied the allegations. As of now, neither the Commission has released any statement regarding the alleged paper leak nor confirmed the report.

JPSC maintains silence

JPSC has maintained silence on the complaints of irregularities in the examination. One of its officials simply said that they have received the information and is being ascertained. Whatever happens, will be updated on the JPSC website, he said. The investigation team has been directed to verify the authenticity of the viral video

Several students could not appear for the examination after the news of the alleged paper leak was spread among the students. State BJP Chief Babulal Mrandi came heavily on Champai Soren government saying that competitive examinations have become a means of earning money for the current government.

"Recently JSSC-CGL exam was conducted, at that time the exam was canceled due to paper leak. The way the paper was leaked today during the examination conducted by JPSC, it is clear that Jharkhand government has made JPSC, like JSSC, a means of earning money," said Marandi on X. Therefore, he appealed to the youth of Jharkhand that he needs their support in uprooting this corrupt government he added.

Marandi assured that as soon as the BJP government is formed, they will selectively send such corrupt people to jail and will ensure the rights of the youth and ensure malpractice-free examinations.

Leader of Opposition in Jharkhand Assembly Amar Kumar Bauri also alleged that Champai government of conducting the JPSC examination in a hurry with incomplete preparation and a malicious attempt to sell seats, has shattered their dreams. It is a shame to have exams in Jharkhand and its paper gets leaked every time, he said.

Meanwhile, Jamtara Deputy Commissioner has formed a three member Special Investigation team to look into the matter. Today, a case of viral video related to JPSC (PT) examination has come up. A Special Investigation Team headed by Deputy Development Commissioner Niranjan Kumar and Project Director, ITDA Jugnu Minj and Sub-Divisional Director General of Police Vikas Anand Languri as the two members, has been formed," said Jamtara DC Kumud Sahay.

FIR against Baghel filed in Mahadev app case

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

THE Chhattisgarh police on Sunday filed a FIR against former chief minister Bhupesh Baghel in the online Mahadev App betting scam case. Though the FIR was filed on March 4, it was announced on Sunday a day after the Lok Sabha polling dates were announced. Baghel is the Congress candidate for the Rajnandgaon constituency where the election will be held on April 26.

"It is a political FIR and my name has been deliberately inserted into it along with others under pressure," Baghel said.

"If the case was registered in Raipur on March 4, why then the FIR copy was released and published from Delhi on March 17 Sunday. Usually EOW or police station uploads FIR the same day on website. The maximum action against Mahadev App has been taken in Chhattisgarh (during Congress regime)," he said, adding that it is for the Centre to get the key accused extradited to India.

The investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) indicated the alleged involvement of senior politicians and bureaucrats in facilitating the Mahadev App illegal betting in reciprocity for "protection money".

In the App betting scam, presumed to be over Rs 6,000 crore, the name of Baghel was conspicuously cited in the supplementary chargesheet of the ED filed early this year before the Prevention of Money Laundering Act court in Raipur.

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • WI: Windy • HR: Heavy Rain • SN: Snow • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	17	2	SNY	Los Angeles	24	13	SNY
Colombo	31	23	SNY	Melbourne	32	19	SNY
Dhaka	34	22	SNY	Moscow	5	0	LC
Dubai	31	18	SNY	New York	11	2	SNY
Houston	21	9	SNY	Singapore	34	24	TDS
Istanbul	13	6	SNY	Toronto	4	-1	LC
London	16	11	SNY	Washington	11	1	SNY

Russian prez polls end amid dissent, Kyiv attacks

Navalny supporters crowd booths in 'Midday against Putin' protest

MOSCOW

RUSSIANS voted on Sunday on the final day of an election to extend Vladimir Putin's rule to three decades, as Ukraine launched fatal attacks on the border and some voters crowded outside polling stations in protest.

Polls closed in Moscow at 1700 GMT after the three-day vote marked by a surge in fatal Ukrainian bombardments, incursions into Russian territory by pro-Kyiv sabotage groups and vandalism at polling stations. The Kremlin cast the election as an opportunity for Russians to throw their weight behind the full-scale military operation in Ukraine, where voting is also being staged in Russian-controlled territories.

Tributes to Navalny

Supporters of the late Alexei Navalny, Putin's most prominent rival who died in an Arctic prison last month, urged voters to crowd into polling stations at noon and spoil their ballots for a "Midday Against Putin" protest, a strategy endorsed by Navalny shortly before his death.

At least some voters appeared to heed that call at Moscow polling stations, who said they had come to honour Navalny's memory and show their opposition in the only legal way possible.

Voters queue outside the Russian Embassy in London to vote in Russia's presidential elections | AFP

Team Navalny described it as a success, releasing pictures and videos of people crowding near polling stations in cities across Russia around noon.

At Navalny's grave in a Moscow cemetery, journalists saw spoiled ballot papers with his name written on them left on a pile of flowers.

"I came to give my farewell to him. He is a hero to me," said Natalya, a 65-year-old pensioner, who came to spoil her ballot.

"I came to show that there are many of us, that we exist, that we are not some insignificant minority," said 19-year-old student Artem Minasyan at a polling station in central Moscow.

Leonid Volkov, a senior aide to the late opposition leader who was recently attacked in Lithuania where he fled political persecution in Russia, thanked Russians for joining the protest. "You saw each other. The whole world saw you. Russia is not Putin. Russia is you," he wrote on social media.

There were repeated acts of protest in the first days of polling, with a spate of arrests of Russians accused of pouring dye into ballot boxes or arson attacks. Any public dissent in Russia has been harshly punished since the start of Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

However, other voters expressed their support for Putin, saying that casting their ballots for him was the only way to guarantee peace.

Meanwhile, a surge in Ukrainian strikes on Russia continued unabated with the Russian defence ministry reporting at least eight regions attacked overnight and on Sunday morning. Three airports serving the capital briefly suspended operations following the barrage, while a drone attack in the south sparked a fire at an oil refinery. *AFP*

An effigy of Russian President Vladimir Putin, which depicts him bathing in blood in a symbolic protest against the Ukraine invasion, at a rally in front of the Russian embassy in Berlin | AFP

KEY EVENTS

■ Yulia Navalnaya, the widow of the late opposition leader Alexei Navalny, was seen in the queue to cast her ballot at the Russian embassy in Berlin on Sunday. She told reporters that she wrote her dissident late husband's name on her ballot after voting in Berlin. "Obviously I wrote Navalny's name," she said

■ Authorities in Russia have detained some 74 people across the country for protest actions linked to the presidential election, a police monitoring group said on Sunday

■ Russian nationals formed long queues outside Moscow's embassy in Paris on Sunday to cast their vote. Similar scenes played out in Berlin and other European capitals

Yulia Navalnaya talks to a woman during a rally near the Russian embassy in Berlin | AFP

BIDEN ROASTS TRUMP AT DC ANNUAL PRESS DINNER

WASHINGTON

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden joked about Donald Trump and his own age at an annual media dinner on Saturday — before unloading deadly serious criticisms of his rival in November's election.

"One candidate's too old and mentally unfit to be president," the 81-year-old Democrat quipped at the Gridiron Club in Washington. "The other guy's me."

Democrat Biden was making his first speech as president at the annual white tie gala for the US media and political elite, an event that Republican former president Trump addressed in 2018.

Biden is trailing in a number of polls and faces voters concerns about his age, which he has tried to address by highlighting 77-year-old Trump's recent verbal slip-ups. In his remarks, Biden took a swipe at Republicans in Congress who have launched an impeachment inquiry into his son's business dealings, saying they would "rather fail at impeachment than succeed at anything else."

He added that Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, sitting at the head table with Biden on the eve of St. Patrick's Day "took one look at Congress and he asked for another Guinness." Varadkar and Biden both pushed during a meeting at the White House on Friday for Republicans to stop blocking military aid for Ukraine.

AFP

ASIA MATTERS

THAILAND

LAWMAKERS TO SAY YES TO SAME SEX MARRIAGE

Thailand is pushing ahead with its plan to legalise same-sex marriage, with lawmakers gearing up to approve the amendments to the country's civil and commercial code on March 27. The changes would make the country the first in South-east Asia to guarantee equal marital rights. A committee set up by Thailand's House of Representatives on March 14 approved the draft amendment, said the deputy chairman of the panel. Once the Bill clears the elected lower house, it will need a final approval from the Senate and then a royal endorsement before it can be enforced. *Agencies*

MALAYSIA

HEATWAVE SWEEPS PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

Heatwave warnings were issued to more areas, especially the northern parts of the Peninsular Malaysia, as the hot and dry season continues to affect the nation. Dams in these areas are also reaching water levels that would trigger warnings. The Pokok Sena district in Kedah was issued a level 2 heatwave warning. *Agencies*

SINGAPORE

960 PEOPLE LOST $538K IN SWIFT TICKET SCAMS

At least 960 people have lost over $538,000 in scams involving tickets to American pop star Taylor Swift's Eras Tour concert in Singapore, from January 1 to March 12, said a police report. The sixth and last concert of Swift was held on March 9. Assistant Commissioner of Police Aileen Yap said the reports lodged include some from victims who bought tickets from resellers and went to the National Stadium, only to discover that the tickets were fake and they could not enter the venue. In other cases, scammers became uncontactable after receiving money from victims. *Agencies*

Blinken arrives in S Korea for third Summit for Democracy

SEOUL

US SECRETARY of State Antony Blinken arrived on Sunday in South Korea on the first stop of a brief Asia tour also including the Philippines, as Washington moves to reinforce ties with two key regional allies.

Blinken landed Sunday afternoon ahead of the third Summit for Democracy on Monday, an initiative of US President Joe Biden, which Seoul is hosting this week.

Before arriving in Seoul, Blinken made a brief stop in Bahrain, where he spoke to King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa about efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza.

The summit, which runs from March 18 to 20 will bring together government officials, NGOs and civil society members.

Seoul is one of Washington's key regional allies, and the United States has stationed about 27,000 American soldiers in the South, to help protect it against the nuclear-armed North.

Seoul's conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol has boosted ties with Washington and sought to bury the historical hatchet with former colonial power Japan to better guard against Pyongyang's threats. *AFP*

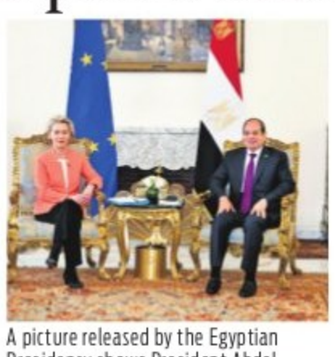
EU, Egypt ink $8-bn deal focused on energy imports and migration

CAIRO

THE EUROPEAN Union and Egypt on Sunday signed a 7.4-billion-euro ($8 billion) financial package to support the indebted north African country, boost energy sales to Europe and stem irregular migrant flows.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen was joined in Cairo by the leaders of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece and Italy for the signing ceremony with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

The strategic partnership deal includes billions in credit over coming years and stepping up gas and other energy flows to help Europe "move further away from Russian gas", said a senior European Commission official.



A picture released by the Egyptian Presidency shows President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (R) with EU chief Ursula von der Leyen | AFP

Von der Leyen said that "today we elevate the relationship between the EU and Egypt to a Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership and we agree on a package ranging from trade and investment to low carbon energy, managing migration, and education, culture and youth".

The agreement includes five billion euros in loans over four years, 1.8 billion euros in investment and hundreds of millions for bilateral projects including on migration, said the European official.

Egypt, mired in a painful economic crisis, borders warbattered Libya and the centres of two ongoing conflicts — the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip and Sudan's war between the regular armed forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. *AFP*

PM Sunak's leadership in turmoil amid infighting

LONDON

A UK minister came out strongly in defence of his party leader Rishi Sunak on Sunday as the increasingly beleaguered prime minister attempts to ride out infighting within the ranks, with sections to the right of the governing Conservative Party calling for a leadership change ahead of a general election expected later in the year.

The 43-year-old British Indian leader has ruled out the prospect of an early election in May and with possibly months before he decides to go to the electorate, the murmurings of rebellion within the Tory ranks fearful of losing their seats seem to be growing at a steady pace.

Transport Secretary Mark Harper was directly asked during a television interview if he thinks Sunak will be the leader of the Conservative Party at the general election.

"Yes he will, and he'll take us into that election and he'll set out very clearly that we're a government with a plan," Harper told 'Sky News'.

However, according to 'The Daily Telegraph', a meeting is understood to have taken place this weekend between leading figures on the right wing of the Tory party and prominent supporters of Mordaunt. 'Some right-wing MPs met with Team Penny this week, where they expressed the view they were prepared to back her. They take the view that Penny is preferable to Rishi Sunak right now. Penny Mordaunt is now seen as the most likely person to stem the losses,' the newspaper quoted a source as saying.

The discussions are reflective of despair among some Conservative MPs at the steady lead in favour of the Opposition Labour Party in pre-poll surveys and the prospect of heading towards a disastrous defeat. *PTI*

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL PRINCIPAL JUDGE FAMILY COURT, AT BENGALURU

M.C. No. 3154/2022

BETWEEN : Mr. Mayank Kumar Giri ...Petitioner

AND: Mrs. Abha Giri ...Respondent

NOTICE TO THE RESPONDENT

To, **Mrs. Abha Giri** D/o Ashok Giri, R/at: No.28, Kaveri, Room No.6, 2nd Floor, 24th Main, Parangipalya, HSR Layout, Bangalore 560102.

Whereas, the above named petitioner has filed the above petition under section 13(1)(ia) of the Hindu Marriage Act against the respondent for the Decree of Divorce of the marriage and such other relief. You are hereby summoned to appear in person or through a pleader duly instructed before II Additional Principal Judge Family Court, Bengaluru.

Take notice that in default of your appearance **on the 06th day of June 2024 at 11.00 A.M.** the petition will be heard and determined in your absence, placing you as ex parte.

Issued under my hand and seal of this Court on this 17th day of February 2024.

By order of the Court, Sheristedar, Family Court, Bengaluru.

Advocate for Petitioner :
M.N. Leela Raju, Advocate
Supreme Law Associates
No. 1668/A, GV Complex, 14th Main, Sector-7, HSR Layout, Bengaluru-560 102.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE XXV ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, AT BANGALORE

(CCH - No 23) **O. S. No. 5349 of 2023**

BETWEEN : **1) Mrs. B. R. SHYLAJA,** wife of Chandrashekar G.V, aged about 45 years, residing at No. 335, 9th Main, Dollors Colony, 4th Phase, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore - 560 078.

2) Sri. G. V. CHANDRASHEKAR, son of Late G.T. Venkataswamy, aged about 56 years, residing at No. 335, 9th Main, Dollars Colony, 4th Phase, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore - 560 078

3) Sri. G. V. PALAKSHA, son of G.T. Venkataswamy Reddy, aged about 58 years, residing at No. 114, 4th Floor, 21st A Cross, H.S.R. Layout, Bengaluru South Bengaluru - 560 102

4) Smt. N. SUDHA, wife of Late G.V. Nagaraj Reddy, aged about 56 years,

5) Mrs. DRUTHI G.N., daughter of Late G.V. Nagaraj Reddy, aged about 32 years

6) Ms. RASHMI G.N., daughter of Late G.V. Nagaraj Reddy, aged about 29 years,

Plaintiff Nos 4 to 6 are residing at No 183, Gunjur, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru-560087. **: PLAINTIFFS**

AND : 1. Sri. G.V. SATHISH REDDY, @ Sri. G.V. SATHEESH REDDY, son of Late G.T. Venkataswamy Reddy, aged about 58 years, residing at Gunjur Village, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk.

2. M/s. VIRTUESA TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED, registered office at No. 21, Samarpan Enclave, ECC Road, White field, near Deens School, Bengaluru - 560066

: DEFENDANTS

Summons to Defendant nos. by way of paper publication

D2. M/s. VIRTUESA TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED, registered office at No. 21, Samarpan Enclave, ECC Road, White field, near Deens School, Bengaluru - 560066

Whereas, the Plaintiffs have instituted the above Suit seeking a declaration that a General Power of Attorney and a Release Deed dated 05.03.2021 purportedly executed by the Plaintiff No. 2 in favour of the Defendant No.1 in respect of the Suit Schedule Property are null and void and not binding on the Plaintiffs and for other consequential reliefs, including for possession of the Suit Schedule Property.

Take notice / summons that you are hereby called upon to appear before this Hon'ble Court in person or through an Advocate on 25th April 2024, at 11.00 A.M. to contest in the above suit, failing which the matter will be heard and determined ex-parte.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the converted Survey No.186/3, BBMP, 1967, duly converted from agricultural to industrial purposes, measuring to an extent of 1 acres situated at Hoodi Village, Krishnarajpuram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk and bounded on:

East by : Property belongs to Ramesh Chand
West by : Land in Survey No. 10/1A
North by : Property belongs to Prasanna Chari
South by : Property belongs to Thigalara Kakappa

Given my hand and the seal of the Court, on 06.03.2024.

By the Order of the Court
Sd/- Senior Sheristedar
City Civil Court, Bengaluru

Advocate for Plaintiffs
Dhananjay for Joshi Associates
Advocates, No. 18/4, 1st Floor, Saleh Centre Annexe, Cunningham Road, Bangalore - 560 052.

LOST

I, **SREELATHA CHEEMALAPATI,** W/o, Basam Narendranath, aged about 50 years, Residing at, No.15, Papaiah Layout, KEB Road, 13th Cross, Old Madiwala, Bangalore-560068, have Lost my 3 Original Registered Sale Deed Documents bearing Registration Numbers of No.4976/2001-2002, No.3966/2006-2007, and No.2581/2007-2008, all of Book-1, all are Registered in the Office of Sub-Registrar, Jayanagar, Bangalore. Have Filed an E-Lost Report with Karnataka State Police bearing No.0977591/2024, Dated:16/03/2024, Serial No.977591, if anybody found kindly report to the nearest Police Station.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the General Public that my client SRI.BHASKAR.B.S. Son of Sri. Shivashankar has lost the original of General Power of Attorney dated 30.09.1993 executed by Sri. C.V. Gopalaiah, Sri. C.V. Seetharamaiah and Sri. S. Jayakeerthi in favour of Smt.Girija pertaining to the immovable property bearing Site No.22, Property No.1744, formed in Assessment No.1/1, Old No.1, situated at Narayanappana palya Village, Dasanapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk some months back in transit. In case the same is traced by anybody they should hand over the same to the undersigned and also in case anybody is having any claim, charge or interest over the said property, they shall lodge their objections with the undersigned within SEVEN DAYS from the date of Publication of this Notice.

D.S. BHAT, Advocate
M/s. BHAT ASSOCIATES,
1st Main, 5th Cross, Yeshwanthpur, BENGALURU - 560 022.
Mob: 9916994581
BENGALURU, DATE:16.03.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

As per the Schedule hereunder from Smt. Nandini H.N, aged about 43 years, W/o Sri. Gopinath Anandan and Sri Gopinath Anandan, Aged about 53 years. S/o Sri. E Anandan, both are Residing at No. 46, 5 Main, 16" Cross, AECS Layout. Sanjaynagar, RMV II Stage, Bangalore-560 094. The said Smt. Nandini HN. and Sri Gopinath Anandan have represented to the previous owner by name Smt Padma Srivastan, that he was lost in transit the original sale deed dated 24.07.1972, Doc. No. 781 and Original Possession Certificate dated 20.05.1979, in respect of the Schedule Property and a Complaint to this effect has been lodged by them to Sanjay Nagara Police Station, Bangalore on 18.06.2006. Hence, this Public Notice Any person or body corporate whosoever having any claim, interest, or charge, etc. in whatsoever manner over the change of name herein are hereby called upon to lodge their claim or objections, if any, with supporting documents thereon with the undersigned in person within seven days from the date of publication of this general public notice, failing which my clients will presume that the Schedule Property is free from all sorts of encumbrance of whatsoever nature and proceed to complete the sale transactions per the sale agreement

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Residential Site No. 70, P & T Colony, 2nd Stage, earlier Bangalore Postal Employees Co-operative Housing Society, Colony Layout, Geddalahalli, Sanjaynagar. Ward No. 100, PID No. 100-732-70, measuring East to West: 45.0 Feet and North to South: 43.0 Feet, totally measuring 1935 Sq.Ft., along with Constructed RCC Roofed building having Basement 425 Sq.Ft, Ground Floor 1095 Sq.Ft., and First Floor 340 Sq.Ft., with all civic amenities together with all rights, appurtenances whatsoever whether underneath or above surface and bounded on the: East by: Public Road, West by: Site No. 69, North by: Public Road and South by Daffodils English School.

Sd/-KANCHANA U Advocate & Legal Consultant No. 19, 1 Floor, 9th Cross, Cubbonpet Road, BANGALORE 560 002.

March 14th, 2024.

IN THE COURT OF THE IIND ADDL. PRL. SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE AT BENGALURU

G & W.C. No. 107 OF 2023

BETWEEN : Mukund Kumar, S/o Mr. Ram Niwas Sharma, Aged About 42 years, Presently R/at Village Doghra, Post Sahwajpur P.S., Riga District, Sitamarhi, Bihar-843327.

...PETITIONER

AND : Mrs. Neha, W/o Anup Kumar Prasad, Aged about 38 years, D/o Shashi Bhushan Mishra. Presently R/at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Staff Quarters State Highway 104, Yelahanka North, Bengaluru-562149.

...RESPONDENTS

NOTICE RESPONDENT

RESPONDENT : Mrs. Neha, W/o Anup Kumar Prasad, Aged about 38 years, D/o Shashi Bhushan Mishra, Presently R/at JawaharNavodaya Vidyalaya, Staff Quarters State Highway 104, Yelahanka North, Bengaluru-562149.

Whereas, the petitioner has filed the above suit against you for the child custody under Guardian & Wards Act and other consequential relief/s you are above named is hereby summoned to appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through pleader **on the 30.03.2024 at 11 a.m.** to defend the above case, failing which the matter will be heard exparte.

1. The particulars of the minors are as follows as per section 10(1) of Guardian & Wards Act, 1890

I. **a)** Name : Kshitij Sharma, **b)** Sex : Male **c)** D.O.B. (Date of Birth) : 18.03.2009, Age (14 years and 8 months), **d)** Religion : Hindu, **e)** Ordinary Residence : C/o Neha TGT-Hindi, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, State Highway 104, Yelahanka North Bangalore, Bangalore, Karnataka-562149.

II. Name : Kaustubh Sharma, Sex : Male, **a)** D.O.B (Date of Birth) : 16.09.2013 Age (10 years and 2 months), **b)** Religion : Hindu, **c)** Ordinary Residence : C/o Neha TGT- Hindi, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, State Highway 104, Yelahanka North Bangalore, Bangalore, Karnataka - 562149.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this the 14th day of March 2024.

By order of the Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, Senior Civil Judge Court, Bengaluru Rural Dist., Bengaluru.

ADVOCATE FOR PLAINTIFF : **Mukund Kumar**
Presently R/at Village Doghra,
Post Sahwajpur, P.S. Riga District,
Sitamarhi, Bihar - 843327.

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IN THE COURT OF THE CITY CIVIL & SESSION JUDGE AT BANGALORE

P & SC No. 133/2024

Between: **1. SMT.T.SIVAGAMASUNDARI,** W/o Late S.Thirugnanam, aged about 67 years,

2. SRI.KARTHIK THIRUGNANAM, S/o Late S.Thirugnanam, aged about 37 years, Both are residing at: #203 A, Atma Apartments 64,10th Main, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003...

PETITIONERS AND: Nil ... **RESPONDENT**

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS the Petitioners herein have filed the petition Under Section 372of The Indian Succession Act with prayer for grant of Succession Certificate in their favour with respect to the Petition Schedule mentioned herein below which was acquired by Sri Late S.Thirugnanam who is husband of 1st Petitioner and father of 2nd Petitioner died on dated:-02.03.2023. Therefore if any interested persons have any claim / objections on Petition Schedule they are directed to appear before the Hon'ble court (CCH-45) in person or through their Advocate or duly authorized agent in support of their defence to show cause on **22-04-2024** at 11am without fail.

PETITION SCHEDULE

SL NO.	PARTICULARS	FOLIO NO. NO.	CERTIFICATE NO.	NO. SHARES ISSUE	DATE OF
01.	Reliance Industries Ltd	1.67362292, 2.067362292, 3.087362292 4.067362292	1.14564856, 2.51141549, 3.66795133 4.62525004	50(unit price 10/-) 50(unit price 10/-) 200(unit price 10/-) 100(unit price 10/-)	16.03.1995 28.01.1998 13.09.2017 28.11.2009
02.	JSW Steel Ltd.	JSW0723912	2626630	1000(unit price 1/-)	06.01.2017
03.	Ultratech Cement Ltd.	73448921	00124048	56(unit price 10/-)	31.05.2004
04.	Finolex	SO030709	5122691	2560 (unit price 2/-)	17.04.2021
05.	United Spirits	MSO30991	1352	2125 (unit price 2/)	19.06.2018

If you fail to appear on the date fixed, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 12-03-2024 at Bangalore.
By order of the Court, Senior Sheristedar, City Civil and Sessions Judge, Bangalore.

Advocate for Petitioner: **GOWDA H.V.T.**
No. 16, 1st Floor, 14th Cross, Cubbonpet, Bangalore-560 002.

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK
(A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002.

Whereas you the below mentioned Borrower's, Co-Borrower's, Guarantor's and Mortgagors have availed loans from **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited,** by mortgaging your immovable properties. Consequent to default committed by you all, your loan account has been classified as **Non-performing Asset,** whereas **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** being a secured creditor under the Act, and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with rule 2 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued **Demand notice** calling upon the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors as mentioned in column No.2 to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with future interest thereon within **60 days** from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served on some of them for various reasons.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	Loan Account No. & Loan Amount	Details of the Security to be enforced	Date of NPA & Demand Notice date	Amount Due in Rs. / as on
1	**1) M/s. Balaji Tent House,** Represented by it's Proprietor **Mr. Devaraj M, 2) Mr. Devaraj M,** Proprietor of **M/s. Balaji Tent House, Also at: M/s. Balaji Tent House, 3) Mrs. V Jayalakshmi, W/o. Mr. Muthappa, 4) Mr. Muthappa**	**Loan Account No. 30198648906367 30199660003389 Loan Amount: Rs.25,00,000/- Rs.2,70,000/-**	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Site No.02/1, Sy.No.57 and 4, Situated at Malagalu Janatha Colony Village, Yashwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Ward No.73. Presently comes under the Jurisdiction of BBMP and **Bounded on the: East by:** Site belongs to Sy.No.56, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.02, **South by:** Site No.04. Measuring East to West: 30 Ft. and North to South: 20 Ft.	**Date of NPA: 28-02-2024 Demand Notice Date: 14-03-2024**	**Rs.1,22,067.09** (Rupees One Lakh Twenty Two Thousand Sixty Seven and Nine Paisa Only) **due as on 11-03-2024**

Notice is therefore given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor & Mortgagor as mentioned in Column No.2, calling upon them to make payment of the aggregate amount as shown in column No.6, against all the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower within **60 days** of Publication of this notice as the said amount is found payable in relation to the respective loan account as on the date shown in Column No. 6. It is made clear that if the aggregate amount together with future interest and other amounts which may become payable till the date of payment, is not paid, **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** shall be constrained to take appropriate action for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described in Column No.4. Please note that this publication is made without prejudice to such rights and remedies as are available to **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** against the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors of the said financials under the law, you are further requested to note that as per section 13(13) of the said act, you are restrained/ prohibited from disposing of or dealing with the above security or transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise of the secured asset without prior consent of Secured Creditor.

Date: 18.03.2024, Place: Bangalore **Sd/- Authorised Officer, For Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

$3.53 BN India's smartphone exports to the US jumped in April-December this fiscal.

Takeaways from Stress Test results of mid, small-cap funds

Instead of getting panicked about the stress test and taking any steps in haste, investors should build a healthy portfolio with large- and flexi-cap funds

DIPAK MONDAL @New Delhi

WITH growing concern over massive inflows into mid- and small-cap funds, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) asked the mutual funds to do a stress test on these schemes.

The stress test exercise was necessarily made to be done by the mutual funds to see if they face large redemptions pressure, how long will they take to pay the money to their investors. The mutual fund houses have reiterated that the stress test is not new, and that they have been doing it internally without making it public. Some industry insiders have blamed the Sebi diktat to make the stress test result public for creating panic in the market.

A tell-all exercise

The stress test ordered by the Sebi and which is available for all investors to see on the website of Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) turned out to be much more than just disclosure of the fact how long the small and mid-cap schemes would take to liquidate all their holdings. The stress test results show – in 16 columns -- how the funds have performed on five broader categories namely asset under management, time to liquidate the portfolio, market-cap concentration, volatility and valuation.

The stress test that the Sebi has ordered is basically the time taken by mid and small-cap funds under stress condition to liquidate 50% and 25% of their portfolio respectively on a pro-rata basis (i.e. sell securities in the same ratio as the portfolio composition). While calculating the time taken to liquidate portfolio on pro-rata basis, the 20% of least liquid securities of the portfolio are ignored.Though it is not mandatory for AMCs to sell securities on pro-rata basis, for the purpose of stress test it is assumed that the mutual fund scheme will sell the securities on pro-rata basis to ensure equal treatment to all investors of the scheme. Other details which have been submitted by the fund houses include asset under management (AUM) of these schemes, valuation of the portfolio vis-a-vis the benchmark, volatility measured in standard deviation and beta, concentration of small-, mid- and large-cap equities in the portfolio. The data also shows how frequently the portfolio is tweaked by the fund manager.

TOLERANCE LEVEL

Mid-cap funds	AUM (₹ Cr)	Days to liquidate 50% portfolio
Kotak Emerging Equity Fund	39,732	34
SBI Magnum Midcap Fund	16,467	24
HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund	60,194	23
DSP Midcap Fund	16,302	17
Axis Midcap Fund	25,248	12
Small Cap funds		
SBI Small Cap Fund	25,534	60
HDFC Small Cap Fund	28,597	42
Tata Small Cap Fund	6,274	35
Kotak Small Cap Fund	14,189	33
DSP Small Cap Fund	13,703	32

All figs till Feb24 Source: AMFI

Stress Test result

So, what does the stress test result show. How liquid is the small and mid-cap mutual fund scheme where you are investing your money in.

Among the mid-cap funds, HDFC Midcap Opportunities Fund is the largest asset with over ₹60,000 crore assets. The fund would take 12 days to liquidate 25% of the portfolio, while 23 days to liquidate or sell 50% of the equities it holds in its portfolio. This is one of the most illiquid funds in its category after Kotak Emerging Equity Fund. HDFC Midcap Opportunities Fund invests 80% of the money in mid- and small-cap equities, 13% in large-cap and maintains 7% cash. In terms of valuation, the HDFC Midcap Opportunities Fund portfolio shows a 12-month trailing price-to-earnings (PE) ratio of 23 compared with the benchmark PE of 27.

Across all mid-cap funds, schemes may take less than a day to 34 days to liquidate 50% of their portfolio. Of the 26 mid-cap funds, only six are taking 10 or more days to liquidate 50% of their portfolio.

Among the small-cap funds, SBI Small-cap Fund has the most illiquid portfolio as it would take 60 days to sell off 50% of the equities it is holding in its portfolio. It would take 30 days to sell-off 25% of the portfolio. SBI Small-Cap fund has an asset size of ₹25,500 crore, one of the larger funds in asset size in the category. The second most illiquid fund is HDFC Small Cap Fund, which has ₹ 28,600 assets under management. The fund would take 42 days to liquidate 50% of its portfolio and 21 days to liquidate 25% of its portfolio.

Across the category, small-cap funds take anywhere from one day to 60 days to liquidate 50% of the stocks in the portfolio. Most small-cap funds hold from 65%-95% of the portfolio in small-cap equities.

Why illiquidity

Not all but some funds may have to buy small or mid-cap stocks that are not traded with large volume on the exchanges. Some mutual fund schemes may have very high inflows and in order to stick to the fund mandate, they may be forced to buy small-cap or mid-cap stocks with poor liquidity.

Investors should not get too panicked about the stress test diktat of the Sebi, and take any steps in haste. They should instead take lesson from this, and build a 'healthy' portfolio. Investors investing in mutual funds should not have a concentrated exposure to mid and small-cap funds. The core portfolio of an investor should have large- and flexi-cap funds. Mid- and small-cap funds should not go beyond 30-35% of the portfolio.

MONEY MATTERS

WHY FINANCIAL PLANNING NEEDS BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

WE are near the end of the financial year. There is a good chance that your employer will deduct more tax than usual from your salary in February and March. That is because you could not produce proof of tax-linked investments. Many of you would frantically look up your insurance statements, conveyance or rent receipts or loan certificates to claim tax benefits at the last minute. The rush towards the end of the year results from poor or no financial planning.

Tax planning needs to start in April of every financial year if you are serious about it. Put aside a portion of your monthly investments towards tax-saving schemes so that you do not have to put a lump sum at the end of the year. The more you save into tax-saving instruments regularly, it is better than doing it later. There is usually a lock-in on the investment for three years. That inculcates a good investment habit. Your money needs to remain invested for as long as possible to benefit from the power of compounding.

The real issue, though, is not about tax planning. It is also about your attitude towards it. For most of you, it is a burden. There is no need to fret about it. As your income increases, taxes are a certainty. Preparing for that eventuality is better than harping on the tax burden or government's policies. India is not a 'tax haven' like the Cayman Islands or those countries in the Caribbean. There are direct taxes on the incomes of individuals and businesses. There are indirect taxes on expenditure, such as the goods and services tax or GST. As an individual and a law-abiding citizen, you must pay taxes eventually.

Once you understand that, you are ready to take financial planning seriously. There are so many surveys that show the way you plan your household asset allocation. Most of your money lies in property, gold, or fixed deposits. Financial planning needs you not merely to save but also look at investments that consistently beat inflation. Your mind is trained to believe that gold and property are real investments and financial assets like equity are not. That is doing a lot of disservice to your financial future. For example, the BSE Sensex has grown from 100 to 3000 over 20 years to 2000. It has then moved to 65000 in 2020. By 2040, it could potentially cross 7,00,000 by conservative estimates. The profit growth leads to the rise in the index in underlying companies that make up that index. Experts manage the composition of that index by adding and deleting companies at regular intervals. Regularly investing in a Sensex exchange-traded fund would allow you to capture the gains over the next 20 years.

Your investments cannot be thought of as gambling instruments. The craze for getting rich 'quick' is reflected in India's highest number of options contracts. Many of you have opened a demat account and directly chosen derivatives to make money. That shows the tendency to gamble. Speculation is suitable for hedging your existing investment. You cannot make that your source of retirement money. Television channels and OTT platforms are full of ads encouraging people to play poker online. Applications that enable online poker have witnessed lakhs of downloads. The only way you can get rich quickly is through inheritance. Getting rich is a slow process requiring hard work to earn a decent monthly income. It also requires you to focus on financial planning that involves a disciplined approach to regular investing. It also means curbing expenditure.

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

If we look at the management commentary from companies that sell consumer goods to middle-class and rural-income households, we will read distress. Persistently high inflation over the past few years and low income have made things unaffordable. You must either ask for a raise or take up a part-time job besides the existing day job. You cannot invest your limited, hard-earned money into unregulated instruments. Curb your urge to spend and give your investments in equity assets at least 10-15 years to grow. Sometimes, it pays to go slow.

MONEY-WISE

THE STOMACH FOR RISK IN THE EQUITY MARKET

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR

Head of LKW-India. He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com

(Views expressed here are personal)

PETER Lynch the renowned Investment Guru once famously remarked that not everyone has the Stomach for Risk and that those susceptible to making panic sales, should not have invested in Equities (be it stocks or mutual funds) in the first place.

Volatility during 2024 was anticipated by many of us at the turn of the year given the huge increase in inflows into mid and small cap stocks and mutual funds. Hence, I am surprised how much last week's sell-off across several mid and small cap stocks spooked some market participants. It came out of the blue and set the cat among the pigeons, so to speak, at the Indian equity markets.

The decline in indices seems largely triggered by the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) booking profits, expecting the market to cool off and factoring in the worst-case scenarios that could play out in India. So, what happens if that scenario does not play out and the inevitable damage is lesser than anticipated?

Once the dust settles, will those FIIs be back, sooner rather than later, on a buying spree and will that trigger a sharp surge in the Indian indices? Time alone can tell, though if I were a betting man, that is where my money would be. When that will happen, if it does, is the tougher question to answer.

For a long, at the guest lectures I conduct at B-Schools I have spoken to the students about the difference between linear and lateral thinking while investing in the bourses. Back at my place of work, we interact with a fair number of well-educated High Net worth Investors (HNIs) patrons from urban areas across the globe, who have expectedly discussed the state of the market and the road ahead with my team. Most of them have even decided to top up their investments via the SIP / STP route which, I believe, is an optimal linear decision.

A few of our HNI patrons hail from rural areas across India and what they lack in terms of educational 'labels', they more than makeup with their lateral thinking ability to sense a killing whenever the opportunity presents itself. A couple of them always surprise us by simply asking to invest fairly large sums via the Lump-Sum route, sans any queries on the state of and outlook for the equity market.

As a matter of abundant caution and professional compliance, my team did explain the pros and cons of making lump-sum investments and that too in a market that seems richly valued for the near term.

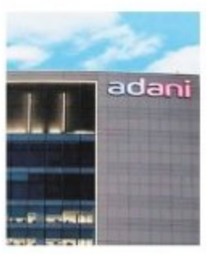
Well, their line of thinking was simple. The investments they were making were for their next generation and with that kind of time frame of a decade in hand, they were confident that the returns would be handsome. Given that kind of clarity of thought, there was little left to debate.

Linear or lateral thought, it is the ability to ride risks and with immense patience, that separates 'few winners' from the 'many also rans' in any equity market.

Adani to invest $14 billion across its firms in FY25

PTI @New Delhi

ADANI group plans to invest more than ₹1.2 lakh crore (about $14 billion) across its portfolio companies that range from ports to energy, airports, commodities, cement and media in fiscal year starting April 1, as it doubles down on its $100 billion investment guidance over the next 7-10 years to grow businesses, sources said.



The projected capital expenditure or capex for 2024-25 (April 2024 to March 2025) fiscal is 40% higher than what the portfolio is estimated to have incurred in FY24. According to analysts, the portfolio is estimated to have incurred a capex of around $10 billion in FY24 that ends on March 31.

Sources said these investments will set the stage for exponential profit growth. The group had previously guided a $100 billion capex over the next 7-10 years. Most of this investment is going to go into group fast growing businesses – renewable, green hydrogen and airports.

As much as 70% of the planned capex will go into its green portfolio -- primarily renewable power, green hydrogen, green evacuation. Of the remaining 30%, the majority will be spent towards airports and ports businesses, they said. In calendar year 2023, the portfolio delivered a $9.5 billion EBITDA (up 34.4% year-on-year), while its net debt has reduced by 4% from March 2023 to September 2023 (balance sheet figures are only declared half yearly). In the December quarter, Adani's portfolio reported record EBITDA growth of 63.6%, taking its 12-month EBITDA to an all-time high of $9.5 billion (₹78,823 crore) in 2023.

Flipkart sees valuation dip by ₹41k cr in 2 yrs

PTI @New Delhi

FLIPKART'S valuation has declined by $5 billion or around ₹41,000 crore as of January 2024 compared to that in January 2022, according to equity transactions carried out by its US-based parent firm Walmart.

The valuation of the e-commerce firm declined to $35 billion as of January 31, 2024, from $40 billion in the financial year ended on January 31, 2022, as per Walmart's change in equity structure in Flipkart.

Flipkart attributed the decline in valuation to the demerger of PhonePe into a separate company. Sources, however, peg the current valuation of Flipkart in the range of $38-40 billion. Walmart diluted 8% equity in Flipkart for $3.2 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2022 reflecting the enterprise value of the e-commerce at $40 billion. The US retail giant in FY2024 increased its shareholding by 10% to approximately 85% by paying $3.5 billion.

'Fintech regulations by RBI play crucial role'

UMA KANNAN @Bengaluru

REGULATIONS in the fintech industry have only enabled India to become a global benchmark in fintech and UPI is one such example, said Rahul Kothari, Chief Operating Officer at Razorpay.

In an interaction with TNIE, he said regulations established by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have played a crucial role in driving financial inclusion and co-creating financial literacy. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met fintech companies and start-ups, and asked regulators to hold monthly meetings with them to address their issues.

When asked about it, he said it is a welcome move and such open dialogue and regular communication will only help the ecosystem come together to mitigate the data, cybersecurity and KYC-related risks, thereby enabling proper adherence to regulatory frameworks.

The Bengaluru-based fintech firm recently launched four new products including Razorpay Payment Gateway 3.0 and UPI-led QR stack for enterprises called Razorpay Dynamic POS Device. Kothari said, "Our goal is to enable companies to focus less on managing money movement and more on innovating, ideating, and scaling their operations." The company has also initiated the process of relocating its domicile to India from the US. "This transition is estimated to take up to 12 months, pending regulatory approvals from both the US and India, which are required for various aspects of the move," he said. In 2022, PhonePe moved its domicile from Singapore to India and its investors had paid ₹8,000 crore in taxes.

Malaysia is step one of our international expansion. Our foray into international payments gives us the necessary boost to innovate more in Southeast Asia.

Rahul Kothari, COO, Razorpay

Razorpay is also planning to go for an Initial Public Offering (IPO) after two years as its reverse flipping process to India is set to close in the next six to 12 months.

"We would like to go for the IPO as a profitable entity, with both our payments and non-payments business achieving profitability. Public markets in India specifically prefer profitable companies. We are fairly ready if we were to just go public as a payments company," he added. Its payments business is already profitable, but around 25% of its revenues also come from non-payment businesses like RazorpayX and Razorpay Capital. "We would like to give ourselves about two years to achieve these milestones before we go public," he added.

Global foray

"Malaysia is step one of our international expansion, last year we launched an international payment gateway for the Malaysian market, post our acquisition of Curlec, which is Malaysia's leading recurring payments platform in 2022. We see immense potential in the SEA region, the market is where India was 8-10 years ago. Our foray into international payments gives us the necessary boost to innovate more in SEA," he said.

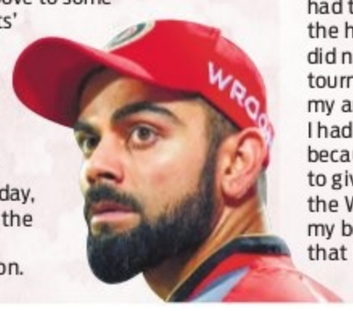
Razorpay has evolved from an online payments company to becoming the country's full-stack financial solutions company. Kothari said that they want to be seen as a one-stop platform for all the money movement needs of businesses not just in India but in Southeast Asia too. "We believe we are making a significant impact in the overall fintech landscape by applying analogies from the past to tackle the challenges that persist," he added.

Archer Deepika tops selection trials for Olympics, WC

Former world number one Deepika Kumari, who missed the entire season last year after becoming mother in December 2022, topped the selection trials for the upcoming World Cups and Paris Olympics in Sonepat on Sunday. The three-time Olympian made the cut along with Bhajan Kaur, Ankita Bhakat & Komalika Bari in the four-member squad.

KOHLI BACK IN INDIA, SET TO JOIN RCB CAMP

NEW DELHI: Batting maestro Virat Kohli on Sunday returned to India, following the birth of his son Akaay, and is set to join his franchise Royal Challengers Bangalore's training camp ahead of the upcoming IPL. Kohli had opted out of the India-England Test series citing "personal reasons". Later on, it was announced that the break was taken so that the batting star could be present for the birth of his son in the UK. "@imVkohli HAS ARRIVED ...and that moment is here! The Red King is back in India, ready to start his #IPLonStar campaign on March 22 v CSK," IPL broadcaster Star Sports tweeted. "Get ready to cheer for the King and groove to some Kingly beats as Star Sports' new anthem - Kohli Calling has dropped on all platforms. And tune in only to Star Sports (as always!) for 'all things Kohli' this IPL." The batter landed in Mumbai on Sunday, and he is expected to join the training camp of Royal Challengers Bangalore soon.



I GOT INJECTIONS, BLOOD REMOVED FROM ANKLE: PANDYA

MUMBAI: In his desperation to regain fitness for the remaining World Cup matches last year, India all-rounder Hardik Pandya said he resorted to extreme measures like taking multiple injections and removing blood clots from his ankle but pushing the boundaries only aggravated the injury, forcing him to sit out of the showpiece. Pandya injured his ankle during India's fourth World Cup game against Bangladesh while bowling his first over of that match, and had to limp off the field with the help of the team physio. He did not play any further part in the tournament. "I got injections done on my ankles at three different places and I had to remove blood from my ankle because of the swelling. I didn't want to give up (on playing the remainder of the World Cup); for the team I will give my best. If there is one percent chance that I can be with the team I will try my best," Pandya told Star Sports. However, Pandya said he was aware that pushing himself hard could bring adverse results, but that's the risk he took to be with the team during a home World Cup. "I was aware that (if) I keep pushing myself I might get injured for (a) long time. For me, that was never the answer. While I was pushing myself, I had this re-occurrence (of injury) and it became a three-month injury. I was not able to walk but I was trying to run (at) that point of time," Pandya recalled. "When I came out (of the field following injury), I informed team that I will be back in five days. I tried to push myself for 10 days, took pain-killers to make a comeback and rejoin the team. But this was a freak injury and very few people know about it. My injury got extended and I had to take more time because when I got injured, it was a 25-day rehab injury," he added.

Kings enter with high hopes

Despite injury concerns, defending champs CSK go into the season with a good all-round squad

GOMESH S @ Chennai

WITH less than a week to go for the opening match of the Indian Premier League — Chennai Super Kings and Royal Challengers Bangalore — star players of the home side have been landing in Chennai since the past seven days or so. From captain MS Dhoni to all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, the biggest names have joined the camp, setting the social media abuzz.

On Sunday, arrived the New Zealand trio — Mitchell Santner, Rachin Ravindra and Daryl Mitchell — who could well be the final puzzle to the CSK's starting XI. While Kiwi stars fitting into the Chennai team is the norm, after the mini auction, CSK had a problem of plenty. They already had Devon Conway and Santner in the squad. Apart from that, Chennai signed Rachin for ₹1.8 crore and Mitchell for ₹14 crore. It meant, CSK, who already have Matheesha Pathirana, Maheesh Theekshana and Moeen Ali, will be able to play only one of the two New Zealanders in the playing XI.

Fast forward to March, Conway is injured, and so is Pathirana. Yet, CSK have one of the most balanced teams in the league. And there is a reason for it. For starters, Chennai has many multi-utility Indian players, who have not just the skill but also the experience — Jadeja, Deepak Chahar, and Shardul Thakur. Shivam Dube is yet to join the camp, but should not be a surprise if he gets fit in time for the opener. That is four potential Indian starters. Then comes the overseas list — Rachin in place of Conway, Mitchell potentially at No 4. That is two top-class batters and eight assured overs in the top four. Add Moeen, who is their primary off-spinner, that's another three all-rounders. Then, there is Mustafizur Rahman who could come in for Pathirana.

Now, CSK haven't rode on the performance of the big overseas stars in the past few years. Dhoni has used the team combination like solving a jig-saw puzzle, bringing the best out of players. No better example than the 2023 IPL final. Come the big day, look at the three names that put CSK at front and centre. Ajinkya Rahane — someone who has been a long-format specialist and was barely making an impact in the IPL. Dube — have been around without a consistent season to show. Ambati Rayudu — way past his prime, on his swansong. That pretty much sums up Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings.

Ravindra Jadeja and skipper MS Dhoni (R) will be key to CSK's success | TWITTER

However, CSK still had a job to do at the auction as they needed at least two viable backups for Rahane and Rayudu. They had an exemplary auction, signing the aforementioned overseas stars, and also an up-and-coming star in Sameer Rizvi. Going into this season, they could easily have seven-eight bowling options and players for specific roles. Dube could still play the spin-hitter with Mitchell to accompany, Rachin could anchor as Gaikwad continues to enforce. Then comes Chahar and Thakur — two pacers who can bat and more importantly, who Dhoni and the team management knows and trusts. With the Impact Player rule in play, they might only look stronger on field than paper. CSK bowling coach Dwayne Bravo, understandably, was happy with the players at his disposal. "As a bowling coach, I find the CSK attack very good... Pathirana, Thakur, Rahman, Chahar and Tushar Deshpande... so the attack looks good, we have a lot of depth and again they are all young fast bowlers," he had said recently. As is often the case, anything could happen in a long tournament like IPL. However, it is safe to say, CSK perhaps have the most balanced squad, with backups for every necessary option, on paper. Which is why, the defending champions will once again start the season as favourites.

What's the real success of WPL? 2024 final answers

KALYANI MANGALE @ Chennai

IT was a momentous occasion for women's cricket when Australia and India walked onto a packed Melbourne Cricket Ground on March 8, 2020. No one had seen 86, 174 fans come in for a women's cricket game before.

For two teenagers, then 15-year-old Shafali Verma and 16-year-old Richa Ghosh, it was the biggest day of their young careers. Despite dominating the entire tournament, Verma could not make her mark in the final and Ghosh, who came in as a concussion substitute, played her shots, but it was not enough. Verma was inconsolable after the match, but anyone who watched her throughout the World Cup and even in the tri-series before the marquee event knew the talent the youngster had.

Four years have passed. In this time, they have led India to the first-ever U19 T20 World Cup victory, represented the senior side in the two ICC tournaments and have also been part of the first season of the WPL. Both had contrasting seasons with Verma being the second-highest run-scorer for the Delhi Capitals while Ghosh struggling to find her feet in the star-studded Royal Challengers Bangalore. However, one look at the numbers in the second season of Women's Premier League will tell you how much they have grown.

This time, Verma, who opened for the Capitals alongside Meg Lanning is the third-highest run-scorer of the season and Ghosh has performed her role as a finisher and a wicketkeeper to perfection with 240 runs in the season, just behind Ellyse Perry and captain Smriti Mandhana. Verma has scored those runs at the top with a strike rate of 156.85, the highest for any batter with a minimum of 100 runs in the season and Ghosh is third on that list with a strike rate of 143.71. When it comes to hitting sixes, Verma has no close competitor as she has smashed 20 sixes throughout the season. Unsurprisingly, Ghosh with her 10 sixes from eight innings has taken the second spot.

If the first season was contrasting for both, with their performance in this season, they have shown that they belong to this stage. There is an added sense of maturity to the way both of them have gone about their business in this season. Verma always had the talent but after two seasons of WPL, she is looking more polished than ever. Along with her batting, Ghosh has also worked on her wicketkeeping skills. She has gone back to the drawing board and become one of the quality wicketkeepers in the country. Her 13 dismissals in the season are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how dominant her presence has been.

The two players, in their early 20s, facing some of the most experienced bowlers in the world, with that much maturity tells you how important having a competition like WPL is. And that brings us to the final when these two stars faced each other in the final of the second season. Verma did what she has been doing throughout the season. Even when her captain was struggling to find her feat early in the powerplay, Verma did not let the opposition settle. A six off Sophie Molineux that helped her break free was sublime. It was followed by the 19 runs she scored from the Indian national side's first-choice pacer Renuka Singh Thakur. Even Ellyse Perry could only watch when Verma smashed a full delivery over the bowler's head. In the powerplay, Verma was batting with a strike rate of 200, before her wicket before her wicket led to Delhi Capitals collapse — they were all out for 113. Verma had done her job with the bat, on the pitch where every other batter struggled to get the start. Ghosh, fittingly, hit the winning runs as RCB won the 2024 WPL title

The legacies of the franchise leagues, at least on the women's side of cricket are still decided by the push it provides to the existing talent and the bench strength it creates. It is too early to talk about the bench strength of WPL, but what it has undoubtedly done is, provide these budding superstars a platform to express themselves. For now, this is the greatest achievement of the WPL.

RCB players after winning the 2024 Women's Premier League title | SPORTZPICS

Leading stars

346	13	20
Runs	Wickets	Sixes
Ellyse Perry	Shreyanka Patil	Shafali Verma

This is just a whole another level for women's cricket, the support has been brilliant, the turnout from the crowd is unbelievable. Ghosh is unbelievable, for such a young age, got plenty of shots and was brilliant, we wanted to stay in the game, kept it under control throughout. Molineux turned the match on it's head, for the rest of the spinners to back it up. Shreyanka Patil at such young age has been excellent

— Ellyse Perry, RCB all-rounder

Brief scores

DC 113 all out in 18.3 ovs (Shafali 44; Shreyanka 4/12, Molineux 3/20) **lost to** RCB 115/2 in 19.3 ovs (Mandhana 31, Devine 32, Perry 35 n.o)

All England Open: Marin and Christie crowned champions

ENS/AGENCIES @ Chennai

SUNDAY was an emotional day for shuttler Carolina Marin.

The former World No 1 ended her title drought after winning the prestigious All England Open Championships in Birmingham, her second win at the well-renowned event after a gap of nine years.

This victory is sweeter as it comes after career-threatening injuries not so long ago. After tearing her ligaments twice in a span of two years, there were genuine concerns if she could regain her magical touch that has fetched her numerous big hits including the gold medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics. The injuries, which had also forced her to miss the Tokyo Olympics, had undoubtedly affected her both physically and mentally. And that was reflective on the court with Marin lacking that killer instinct. But she persisted. Big wins over rivals, who had overtaken her in terms of rankings and overall output, offered a glimpse of hope as she continued to dig deeper.

Her hard work and persistence has finally paid off, that too a Super 1000-level title. What's more impressive is the list of shuttlers she beat during the event. She beat Chen Yu Fei (reigning Olympic champ) in the quarterfinals, got the better of Tai Tzu-ying (Tokyo Olympics silver medallist) in the semis and Japan's Akane Yamaguchi in the summit encounter. Marin was leading 26-24, 11-1 in the women's singles final before Yamaguchi retired. All those names are touted to be among medal contenders in the upcoming Paris Olympics.

Jonatan Christie, who had ended Lakshya Sen's run on Saturday, won the all-Indonesian final against Anthony Ginting to claim the men's singles crown. Christie made it look easy, winning 21-15, 21-14. Having endured a tough start to the year, this is a timely boost for Christie.

Carolina Marin won All England Open title after a gap of nine years | AP

Alcaraz rallies to end Sinner's winning streak

AGENCIES @ Indian Wells (California)

CARLOS Alcaraz defeated Jannik Sinner 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 to end the Italian's 19-match winning streak and advance to the BNP Paribas Open final on Saturday night.

Alcaraz retained his world No. 2 ranking with the victory and extended his winning streak to 11 matches at Indian Wells, where he'll play fourth-seeded Daniil Medvedev in Sunday's title match. It's a rematch of last year's final, won by Alcaraz in straight sets. Top-ranked Iga Swiatek plays ninth-seeded Maria Sakkari in the women's final Sunday.

Medvedev outlasted 17th-seeded American Tommy Paul 1-6, 7-6 (3), 6-2. Paul was up a set and 3-2 in the second-set tiebreaker when he rolled his left ankle and Medvedev took control. Sinner led 2-1 in the first set when the match was suspended for more than three hours because of rain in the Southern California desert. Rain also affected the women's semifinals on Friday night.

Carlos Alcaraz rejoices after winning a game against Jannik Sinner | AP

Sinner went on to dominate the first set before Alcaraz changed his tactics. The Spaniard started coming to the net more and moving Sinner up and back. "I had to change my game a little bit in the second set, that was a good thing for me, to change my style a little bit," Alcaraz said. "I changed the return position, and that's why I gave myself a chance to put more balls in play so I could wait for my chances (to attack)."

Sinner could have knocked Alcaraz out of the second spot with a win. He had won 19 matches in a row dating to last year, including 16 straight this year.

EXPRESS READ

Gulveer breaks 16-yr-old NR in men's 10,000m

NEW DELHI: Asian Games bronze medallist Gulveer Singh shattered a 16-year-old national record in the men's 10000m to finish second in his heat at The Ten in San Juan Capistrano in California. He clocked 27.41.81 on Saturday to better the earlier national mark of 28:02.89 set by Surendra Singh.

Hockey natls: Haryana, Odisha & Mizoram win

PUNE: Haryana, Odisha and Mizoram registered victories in their respective matches of the Hockey India senior women's national championship here on Sunday. Thanks to their wins, Haryana and Odisha sealed their berth in the quarterfinals of the championship.

FA CUP

Man United edge Liverpool in thriller; Chelsea survive scare

AGENCIES @ London

MANCHESTER United ended Liverpool's quest for a quadruple of trophies in Jurgen Klopp's final season as Amad Diallo's winner edged a thrilling FA Cup quarterfinal 4-3 post extra-time.

The Ivorian winger was sent off for a second booking after taking his shirt off in celebration at the end of a chaotic 120 minutes that kept United's chances of ending the season with silverware alive.

Twice Erik ten Hag's men had to stage late comebacks to reach the last four.

Two goals in three minutes from Alexis Mac Allister and Mohamed Salah towards the end of the first half swung the game in Liverpool's favour after Scott McTominay opened the scoring.

Antony's first goal at Old Trafford for more than a year kept United alive to send the game into extra-time.

Once again Liverpool edged in front when Harvey Elliott's deflected shot found the bottom corner. But Marcus Rashford, who had missed a glorious chance to win the tie deep into injury time, made amends by drilling home to make it 3-3.

Man United's Amad Diallo (L) scored his side's fourth goal vs Liverpool | AP

Diallo then scored just his second ever United goal in added time of extra-time at the end of a breakneck counter-attack from a Liverpool corner, led by the impressive Alejandro Garnacho.

Earlier, Carney Chukwuemeka rescued Chelsea with a stoppage-time strike that inspired a 4-2 win over 10-man Leicester

Mauricio Pochettino's side were fortunate to survive a stirring fightback from Championship promotion chasers Leicester amid a mutinous atmosphere at Stamford Bridge. Chukwuemeka netted in the closing minutes to save Chelsea from the embarrassment of being forced into extra-time.

Late on Saturday, Bernardo Silva scored twice as Manchester City beat Newcastle 2-0 to reach the semifinals late on Saturday.

Results: Chelsea **4-2** Leicester; Man United **4-3** Liverpool (after extra time). **Saturday:** Manchester City **2-0** Newcastle.

Here is a look at the inception and changes of the Civil Services in India

UPSC History and evolution

THE Union Public Service Commission, as we know it today, is one of India's most important and respected organisations. Responsible for the recruitment and appointment of officers to both the All India Services and the Central Civil Services (Group A and B), the commission today is an indispensable part of the functioning of India's bureaucracy. But, how did the UPSC come to be? How and when has the commission attained this coveted position? What is the history of Civil Services in India?

HERE IS A LOOK AT THE EVOLUTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICES & UPSC

East India Company Raj

Pre-1854: The Civil Servants for the East India Company under the Covenanted Civil Services were nominated by the directors of the company and trained at Haileybury College in London.

1854: Lord Macaulay introduced the concept of merit-based Civil Service in the Report of the Select Committee, presented in the British Parliament and a Civil Service Commission was set up in London for this purpose.

1855: The Civil Service Commission conducted a competitive exam for Civil Services for the first time in London with a maximum age limit of 23 and a minimum age limit of 18. The syllabus design laid a significant weightage of marks on European Classics, making it difficult for Indians to clear the exam.

British Raj

1861: Lord Canning passed the Indian Civil Services Act of 1861, which mandates certain posts in the Civil Services to candidates who were citizens of India for more than seven years, making Indians eligible for Civil Service.

1864: Satyendranath Tagore became the first Indian to clear the Civil Service examination.

1866: The Civil Services was renamed as the Imperial Civil Service, and subsequently the Indian Civil Service.

1870: The Indian Civil Services Act of 1870 is passed, allowing Indians "of proven merit and ability" to hold any Civil Service post without reference to the Indian Civil Services Act of 1861.

1886: The Aitchison Commission was set up by Viceroy Lord Dufferin to recommend changes in the Indian Civil Services. The commission recommended that the categories of covenanted and uncovenanted Civil Services be replaced with Imperial, Provincial, and Subordinate Civil Services. Further, it was recommended that more Indians be appointed to local Civil Service positions.

1912: The Islington Commission suggested that 25 per cent of the higher posts in the Indian Civil Services be occupied by Indians, as well as recommending that the recruitment happen partly in India and partly in England.

Post-Independence

1950: The Federal Public Service Commission was renamed to the Union Public Service Commission as per Clause (1) of Article 378 of the Constitution.

1951: The Indian Parliament passes the All-India Service Act to regulate the recruitment and the conditions of service of persons appointed to the All-India Services common to the union and the states.

1966: The Indian Forest Service (IFS) was also constituted under the act.

1976: The Kothari Committee of 1976 recommended a three-stage selection process for the UPSC which includes an objective-type Preliminary exam, a subjective Main exam, and a Personality Test interview.

1989: The Satish Chandra Committee of 1989 recommended that an essay section be introduced in the written exam, and the interview round carry more weightage.

2004: The Hota Commission of 2004 recommended that an aptitude paper be introduced in the Prelims exam.

2013: The pattern for the Indian Forest Service Examination was made similar to that of the Civil Services Examination.

UPSC What Why When & How

OF INDIA'S TOUGHEST RECRUITMENT EXAM

UPSC — we've all heard of it, but many of us aren't entirely sure of what it entails. Shrouded in illusion, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) administers numerous recruitment exams, including the widely known Civil Services Examination (CSE), but its scope extends far beyond that single exam. It conducts some of the most challenging exams, tasked with recruiting officers for the highest echelons of the Indian government.

Beyond the well-known Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and Indian Police Service (IPS), most students are unfamiliar with the array of services and exams conducted by this board. Hence, *EdexLive* is here to demystify what UPSC is and has to offer in a comprehensive month-long series.

find out

WHAT is UPSC?

UPSC is a constitutional body that conducts examinations for recruitment into the Civil Services and other Central government posts. CSE is one of the most prominent exams conducted by the UPSC, through which candidates are selected for prestigious posts such as IAS, IPS, IFS, and several other Group A and Group B services. Apart from CSE, UPSC conducts a range of exams including Indian Forest Service Examination (IFoS), Engineering Services Examination (ESE), Combined Defence Services Examination (CDS), National Defence Academy Examination (NDA), Naval Academy Examination (NA), and Combined Medical Services Examination (CMS), among others. These exams cater to diverse fields and recruit candidates for administrative, engineering, defence, medical, and other government services.

WHEN was UPSC started?

The UPSC was established on October 1, 1926, and was initially called the Public Service Commission. Post-independence, it became the Union Public Service Commission and was given a constitutional status on January 26, 1950. The primary objective of the body is to conduct Civil Service examinations.

The exams under UPSC are conducted throughout the year for Civil Service and Central government positions.

CSE is typically held annually, however, it usually consists of three stages: the Preliminary examination, the Main examination, and the Personality Test (interview). Those who wish to appear for the Indian Forest Service (IFoS) examination are also required to clear the CSE Preliminary examination and then appear for a separate Mains and interview exclusively for IFoS.

How is UPSC held?

The UPSC is known for its objective and transparent selection process. The exam process includes multiple stages of evaluation, such as written examinations, interviews, and personality tests. This selection procedure comprehensively assesses the knowledge, aptitude, and suitability of candidates for Central government positions. In our upcoming series, we will examine these exams in detail to provide a comprehensive understanding of the exams, however, here is a list of some of the major exams conducted by UPSC and the roles they cover:

MAJOR CIVIL EXAMS

1 Civil Services Examination (CSE)

ROLES COVERED: Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Revenue Service (IRS), and various other Group A and Group B services.

- CSE covers a wide range of administrative, diplomatic, law enforcement, and revenue management roles at both Central and state levels. Officers recruited through CSE are responsible for policy formulation, implementation, and administration across various sectors.

2 Engineering Services Examination (ESE)

ROLES COVERED: Indian Engineering Services (IES) in various engineering disciplines such as Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering.

- ESE recruits engineers for technical and managerial positions in government departments and organisations involved in infrastructure development, public works, transportation, energy, telecommunications, and manufacturing.

3 Combined Medical Services Examination (CMSE)

ROLES COVERED: Medical officer in various government healthcare institutions, including railways, ordnance factories, health services, and municipal corporations.

- CMS selects medical professionals for clinical and public health roles, like preventive healthcare, curative services, family welfare programmes, and medical administration.

4 Indian Forest Service Examination (IFoS)

ROLES COVERED: Indian Forest Service officers responsible for forest management, conservation, and wildlife protection.

- IFoS officers work in forestry, environmental conservation, wildlife management, and rural development, ensuring sustainable use of forest resources and biodiversity conservation.

MAJOR DEFENCE EXAMS

5 Combined Defence Services Examination (CDS)

ROLES COVERED: Officers in the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy.

- CDS recruits officers for combat, technical, and support roles in the Armed Forces, including combat arms, logistics, engineering, medical, and administrative services.

6 National Defence Academy Examination (NDA)

ROLES COVERED: Cadets for the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy.

- NDA prepares cadets for leadership positions in the Armed Forces, offering training in military tactics, leadership, physical fitness, and academic subjects.

UPSC

WHY AIM FOR IT?

The prestige associated with the UPSC exams is undeniable. Candidates spend years preparing for this exam to secure a prestigious position in the Central government. However, what makes these services so alluring? Why do millions of candidates apply for these posts every year? Let's find out

- High standards of recruitment
- Fierce competition
- Career opportunities
- Perks and benefits
- Policy-making and nation-building
- Diversity in opportunities
- Job security
- Work-life balance

STATUS AND LEGACY OF THE BRITISH RAJ

The British Raj had established the Indian Civil Services (ICS), which has a legacy attached to it. This legacy has remained in India even after gaining independence, and Civil Services are still seen as a position of power and governance that symbolises authority. Due to this, these officers are often treated as VIPs. Whether this association is positive or negative is a matter of debate, but the status attached to these services remains unchanged.

SATYENDRANATH TAGORE

The first Civil Servant of Indian origin

AT a time when the Indian Civil Services were only accessible to upper-class Englishmen, Satyendranath Tagore became the first Indian to become a Civil Servant in 1864. Hailing from the famous Tagore family, Satyendranath Tagore was born in 1842 and received his education at Presidency College, Calcutta. He was an active member of the Brahmo Samaj during his college days and even preached its ideals during his probationary training period in England. Upon returning to India, Tagore began his career in the Bombay Presidency, where he was posted as an assistant magistrate, and later, a collector in Ahmedabad. He went on to have a 30-year-long career as a civil servant.

LORD CORNWALLIS

The Father of Civil Services in India

CHARLES Cornwallis (December 31, 1738 - October 5, 1805) was a British Army general and official who was the first Governor-General appointed under the Government of India Act. Lord Cornwallis is referred to as the Father of Civil Services in India because of the administrative reforms he introduced during his tenure as the Governor-General of India from 1786 to 1793. His efforts laid the foundation for the modern Civil Services system in India. He reorganised the administrative and revenue services in India. He established a hierarchy of civil servants (Covenanted and Uncovenanted) who were trained and appointed to administer the British territories. This laid the groundwork for the Indian Civil Service (ICS), which is now the IAS.

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MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

TV broadcasting

On this day in 1948, the first Dutch experimental television broadcast took place in Eindhoven in the Netherlands by Philips

THE START

Philips was a pioneer in the field of television and had been experimenting in the Nat Lab since the late 1920s. The experiential broadcasts were done till 1951

TRANSMISSION

In 1948, 150 employees of Philips received the first TV sets. Trial broadcasts were transmitted from Philips' headquarters in Eindhoven

THE COMPANY

Philips & Co was founded in 1891, by Frederik Philips and his son, Gerard. The first Philips research laboratory, 'Philips Nat Lab' opened in 1914

CE's guide to happenings in the city

PG 2

POLES, PODIUMS & PURSUITS

Formula 1 aspirant Kush Maini on the stellar start to his sophomore year in Formula 2, taking his first pole position, handling the subsequent disqualification and his hopes for the championship...

DESE GOWDA

EVEN before it kicked off, the 2024 Formula 2 season seemed to possess a list of ingredients that spelled an exciting season. This, notwithstanding the introduction of a brand new car, and the prospect of a title challenge between two highly-rated junior talents – Oliver Bearman and Andrea Kimi Antonelli – backed by Formula 1's biggest teams Ferrari and Mercedes, respectively. Yet, when the first competitive session got underway at the Bahrain International Circuit, an Indian driver in his sophomore season emerging on top wasn't something that anyone had expected.

"It was a roller coaster," shares a beaming **Kush Maini**, when we meet him at his home in Marathahalli where he is putting his feet up during a brief hiatus. Sharing his experience topping the qualifying session in Bahrain, the 24-year-old says, "With a new car, a lot of work went into understanding the car and finding a way to be quick – from pre-season testing to the first race weekend. I was satisfied with our progress, but heading into the first weekend, if someone had told me that I would be on pole by two-tenths, I probably wouldn't have believed them. Even during free practice, we weren't in the best position. Yet, everything clicked in qualifying. The car was amazing, and the changes we made worked."

But Maini's elation was short-lived. After the governing body discovered potential 'performance altering' damage on his car, he was disqualified from the session, forcing him to start both Sprint and Feature races in last place. "When you do something so significant for yourself and the country and it's taken away through no fault of your own – it doesn't feel great. But rules are rules and it's easy to feel like a victim in such situations. It was a difficult weekend, and it was all about controlling my emotions. In the end, we made the most out of it, finishing P7 in the feature race from 22nd on the grid and we left with some crucial points," he shares.

During the Bahrain weekend, Maini and his team stressed that the damage didn't have a positive impact on his performance and their assertion was proven right at the following event in Saudi Arabia. Maini was a close contender for pole again on the streets of Jeddah, narrowly missing out to Bearman. "Without that mistake from my side, we would have been on pole. Nevertheless, we inherited pole after Ollie went to F1. It just shows that we are competitive every weekend. Our qualifying pace is probably slightly better than our race pace. But we're getting stronger with race pace, as well. So it's a positive trajectory," he adds.

At the upcoming Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne this weekend, the Alpine Academy junior – who is currently being advised by former two-time F1 world champion Mika Hakkinen – hopes to carry forward that momentum, while doing a better job of stringing together a competitive weekend. "Australia is an exciting, bumpy track. I got my first podium in Melbourne last year, so I love the track and have fond memories of it. I'm confident that we have a solid baseline with the car. If we do everything we can, I am sure there is potential for a win or a podium," he says with a smile. Maini insists that he is not worrying about the overall picture of the championship just yet, instead focussing on trying to maximise individual weekends. Nevertheless, he doesn't rule out his contention for the title either.

Meanwhile, back in Bengaluru meant spending some much-needed quality time with loved ones, a rarity amidst his hectic schedule, he says, "I don't have much time during the year to spend with friends, family, or home. So when I return, I try to make the most of it, while still maintaining my training regimen. I usually try to abstain from drinking during the season, but when I'm home, it's wonderful to go out with friends for dinner or a movie. I spend a lot of time in the United Kingdom and other countries, but they are not home. Home is here in Bengaluru."

Watch an extended interview on our social media channels
X:@XpressBengaluru
Instagram:@xpress_bengaluru

CITY READ

Veena virtuoso Suma Sudhindra to perform at Christ University

Christ University's Department of English and Cultural Studies in collaboration with SPIC MACAY (Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth) has organised a musical evening to be held on March 18, at 5.30pm within the college premises in Koramangala. As part of a one-day national conference Melange 2024, the event will feature a performance by the Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee and renowned veena player **Suma Sudhindra** accompanied by recognised artistes like Matoor Srinidhi on violin, SN Narayana Murthy on ghatam and Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma on mridangam. Entry is free.

Bengaluru City University partners with British Council for online library

The Bengaluru City University recently collaborated with the British Council to establish an online library accessible to all its students and faculty members from March 15. The initiative came to life after a meeting between the University's Vice-Chancellor Prof Lingaraja Gandhi, and British Council officials Vijayalakshmi Thyagarajan and Janaka Pushpanathan. The extensive online library facility post-inauguration will provide digital access to its stakeholders with a wide range of books, journals, magazines, research publications, and multimedia content. As per the college's norms, students, researchers, and faculty members will be able to access these resources from anywhere. The event was attended by the librarian, deans, and registrars, along with syndicate Samarth Muniraju and Saraswati from Mysore University.

Over 1,000 women participate in a walkathon to promote women's health and empowerment

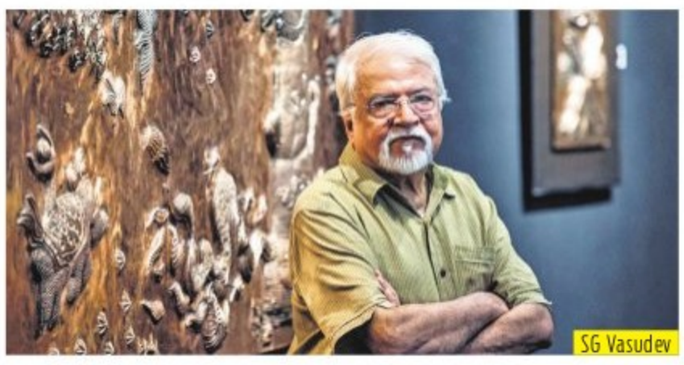
Dr Lakshmi Roopesh, a dentist, Ranjitha Janardhan, a senior educationist, and Jayanthi Janardhan, director of an events management company, in partnership with Trilife Hospital organised 'Woman-athon', a walkathon to celebrate Women's Day recently. Aimed at promoting women's health and empowerment, the walkathon saw participation by over a 1,000 women who embarked on a 3-km journey. Prior to the walkathon, a professional warm up Zumba session was conducted. Participants also got free General Random Blood Sugar (GRBs) tests and diet counselling video consultations provided by Trilife Hospital during the event.

This week, the Indian Institute of World Culture is hosting a unique exhibition featuring works by renowned artist SG Vasudev, paying tribute to the life and works of poet AK Ramanujan

EXPRESS FEATURES

ROOTED in South India's landscapes, AK Ramanujan's poems resonate with universal themes of love, loss, and the quest for meaning. Whether through his original works or translations of ancient Kannada and Tamil poetry, Ramanujan sought to blend modernity with tradition. This week, Bengalurueans can experience his poetry through a new medium.

The exhibition Tribute to Ramanujan, features works by renowned artist SG Vasudev, which are largely visual representations of Ramanujan's works. On display till March 24, at the Indian Institute of World Culture (IIWC), Basavanagudi, the initial inspiration for the exhibition came from the poet. "I was first introduced to AK Ramanujan by Girish Karnad in the 1960s. Later, I went on to do cover designs for his books, and he also acquired some of my paintings. And sometime in the early '90s, when he had come to Bengaluru – which he often did – he visited my studio. He saw some of my drawings and sketches – some of which were unfinished or abandoned. He was surprised to find out the number of revisions that I did before finalising a cover design. I told him the process was more or less the same as writing. You write, edit, and rewrite," shares Vasudev, adding, "He thought it was very interesting and wondered if I could do the drawings, reacting to his poems. He told me, you do the drawings and I will come and read those poems at the exhibitions. I took it up as a challenge and started working on them. But soon after, he passed away."



SG Vasudev

DRAWING ON POETRY

Drawings by artist SG Vasudev on display at the IIWC till March 24 | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Despite Ramanujan's passing, Vasudev continued with the project, creating a series of 35 artworks inspired by the poet's English and Kannada poems. The first showcase of these works in 1995 saw Karnad stepping in to recite the poems, filling the void left by Ramanujan. "This time, we are showcasing 28 works. And 26 are based on Ramanujan's works, while two are my tributes to Ramanujan, the person. I looked up to him as a powerful head, like a Kathakali dancer who has so many things around his head. That's one drawing. The second one is the depiction of him as an avatar of Vishnu," he adds.

AK Ramanujan

GRUB HUB

Aslam Gafoor (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales and marketing with well-known hotels, and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'** The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday. The first prize winner will win a voucher worth ₹1,000 from Nando's**

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1) Naengmyeon 2) Hákarl 3) Crickets

FIRST 3 TO GET IT RIGHT

1) Jeevan SR Srinath
2) Lathish Venugopal
3) Pradeep Kumar

XPRESS FOCUS SMD INITIATIVE

LOBB CHRONICLES

Revolutionising Indian Logistics

In 2015, two minds were contemplating the creation of something that would cause ripples in one of the most disorganised sectors in India: logistics. Jayaram and Venu Kondur, a passionate and ambitious duo, united with a shared dream of crafting something extraordinary. With their diverse experiences, each bringing unique skills and perspectives to the table, they initiated to build a startup that would disrupt the industry. Jayaram relocated from the USA to India, where he seized the opportunity to work with his uncle's team to establish and manage a logistics company with a nationwide presence. Initially tasked with software development, he later moved into business and operations, engaging with stakeholders who operated in a fragmented, manual, and time-consuming manner.

Hemanth G, CTO; Jayaram, Head Operations; and Venu Kondur, CEO, LOBB

India was on the brink of digital transformation, evident in the way air and bus tickets were being booked. Meanwhile, Venu, having experience in software development for logistics, frequently brainstormed with Jayaram about the logistics market in India. The idea for LOBB emerged from discussions between the founders over a period of six months.

Their entrepreneurial spirit was ignited by a shared dissatisfaction with the status quo. Observing inefficiencies, market gaps, and untapped opportunities, they resolved to create a solution that not only addressed existing problems but also revolutionised the way people approached logistics. Jayaram reflects, "We attempted various approaches to solve the issues, some of which failed. We believe in a 'try and fail first' approach."

In 2019, following their investors' advice, they focused on selected markets and products, yielding promising results and increasing transactions. This success prompted the expansion of branches and staff.

The team dedicated countless hours to brainstorming, conducting market research, and refining their concept. Venu, the CEO, spent significant time with fleet owners and drivers, immersing himself in their daily routines and businesses. He recalls, "To understand their daily routines and businesses, I spent three days with truckers day and night."

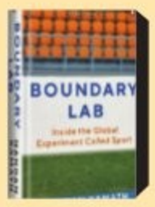
Securing funding was the next hurdle and though the journey was challenging, their persistence paid off when they secured the necessary funding. Venu asserts, "While traditional brokers with limited market presence may be seen as competition, I believe our value-added services make a significant difference."

With financial backing, the team developed a prototype of their product or service, overcoming technical and logistical challenges along the way. As the prototype took shape, they shifted focus to marketing and community-building, recognising the importance of creating an experience for users. Leveraging social media, word-of-mouth, and innovative campaigns, they generated buzz and interest in their creation.

Finally, Lobb was officially launched, greeted with overwhelming positivity and user acceptance. Success brought new challenges — scaling operations, managing increased demand, and staying ahead of competitors. Yet, anchored by their passion, innovation, and resilience, the team persisted. Venu shares, "Lobb has established a strong presence in South and West India, and our aim is to expand into the North and East regions."

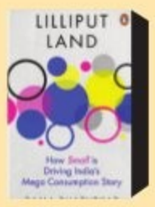
What began as a shared dream in a small room evolved into a thriving business, leaving an indelible mark on the market and inspiring others to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions.

BOOK NOOK



Boundary Lab
By Nandan Kamath

In its quest for universal rules, organised sport must regularly balance multiple interests and answer difficult questions. This book looks at how the resulting debates influence the way we live, view each other, and organise our world.

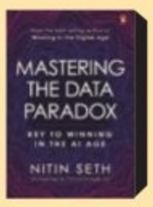


Lilliput Land
By Rama Bijapurkar

Lilliput Land provides a 'people lens' to understand the paradoxes and challenges that dot India's market opportunity and discusses the drivers and shapers of its future.

How Not to Be a Superwoman
By Nilanjana Bhowmick

The book explores the immense pressure women face to excel in every role – as mothers, career women, partners, and friends – and the toll this pursuit takes on their mental health and happiness.



Mastering the Data Paradox
By Nitin Kulkarni

In a data-first world and at the dawn of the AI age, the book provides us with opportunities to push our thinking, to innovate, to transform, and to create a better future at all levels – individual, enterprise, and the world.

MUSICAL DUO

A lady takes to the mic impromptu as musician Vivek Diyali plays the guitar during a karaoke session at Sublime Galleria, UB City | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

QUICKFIX

SAGO PUNUGULU

INGREDIENTS

- **Sago:** 1 cup
- **Onion:** 1
- **Jeera:** 1 tsp
- **Coriander leaves:** 1 bunch
- **Curd:** 1/2 cup
- **Green chilli:** 2
- **Salt:** 1 tsp

METHOD

- Soak the sago in half a cup of curd.
- To the soaked sago, add onions, green chilli, salt, jeera, and coriander leaves.
- Mix them together, making sure it is not too slippery.
- In a pan of hot oil, add this mixture in small quantities and fry them.
- Serve hot and enjoy.

Contributed by **Sindu Priya**, Hyderabad

DR VIVEK ARORA

drvivekarora@hotmail.com

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Dr Gandhi's Pet Clinic, Delhi.

After a bath at the cleaning services my dog, a half-stray, gets rashes. What can be done about this?

I empathise with you for your child picking up rashes, and I sincerely hope we can help you avoid it in the future. I suggest you and other parents mention age, gender, neutered or intact in your future queries. Some pointers that can help you are:

a) Always use a degreasing and defolliculising shampoo for bathing purposes until medically advised; ingredients like benzoyl peroxide, chlorhexidine are safe to use. Do check the make of the shampoo, it'll tell a lot about the quality and research that goes into making the shampoo.

b) Using a scrub of coconut oil and camphor before bathing eases a lot of irritation on the skin.

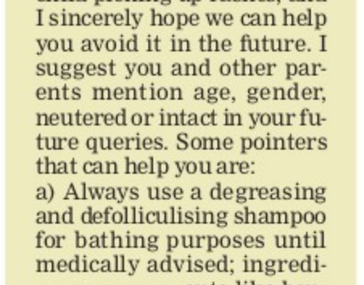
c) Always carry your own towel and shampoo to common grooming places or salons.

d) Don't fall into the trap of getting your dog shaved, sheared, and then shampooed. They don't need to be shaved.

e) An important aspect of dog rearing is that they don't require bathing as much as they require combing. Your child should be combed twice a day.

f) Certain dogs, can, however, be allergic to all kinds of chemicals, in that case, avoid giving them a bath until it is required for a skin condition. Use an Omega 3, 6, and 9 supplement.

ASK AN XPERT



FITBIT

BALASANA
(CHILD POSE)

Balasana is a popular prone pose that is practised across all styles of yoga. Considered to be one of the unsupported restorative practices, it helps bring the heart rate back to normal when done post-any yoga flow. In fact, it is a counter or cooling practice and helps children quickly connect back to their breath as they settle down, relaxing their back. In this practice, the spine should remain relaxed in the forward fold, and the focus should be on breathing, watching how the chest and abdomen push towards the thighs.

STEPS

- Sit in Vajrasana (Thunderbolt Pose) and take a few breaths here.
- Align your buttocks a bit on the heels by keeping your knees at a short distance from each other.
- Inhale, take a deep breath and stretch your spine.
- Exhale, and bend your upper body towards the front.
- Keep your hands in the back, with the palms touching the floor.
- Place your arms on the sides of your thighs with the palms facing upwards.
- Try to touch the head on the ground while breathing.
- Stay here for one minute and breathe slowly, with your eyes closed.
- To release, bring your palms towards the shoulder and slowly raise your upper body by placing your palms on the floor for support.
- Realign to Vajrasana and return to the previous position. Keep a check on your breathing.
- Those who aren't able to place the head on the floor can use props like a pillow or towel to rest the head.

LIMITATIONS

- Students with any injury or a recent surgery at the ankles, shoulder, knee joints, or hip joints, people who have acute knee joint pain, rheumatoid arthritis, seniors, postnatal women who have undergone a caesarean section, and pregnant women with knee joint pains and heart ailments should avoid this.
- Those who have HBP, migraine, epilepsy, or asthma must be guided and practise at shorter intervals.

BENEFITS

- Stretches the shoulders, back, and ankles.
- Stretches and strengthens the tendons and ligaments of the knees.
- Increases the flexibility of the lower limbs, ankles, and feet.
- Eases the neck and enhances its flexibility.
- Increases the blood circulation to the heart and makes the breath calm and rhythmic.
- Relieves the stiffness of the lower back and neck.
- Stimulates digestive organs and reduces migraines.
- Calms the body and mind, ensuring better sleep.
- Strengthens the joints and heals restless leg syndrome.
- Enhances metabolism, treating constipation, flatulence, and lack of appetite.
- Chanelises the prana from Root Chakra to Sahasrara Chakra and vice versa.
- Stimulates Ajna Chakra, bringing clarity and wisdom.
- Suitable for postnatal women, teens, or the visually impaired.
- Cooling-down practice for sportspersons.

By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

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WHATWHENWHYWHERE

Flex Your Moves
Whether you are a dancer or a fitness freak, this gymnastics session will help your body become flexible and strong, helping you move smoother than ever.

WHEN: March 19, 7am
WHERE: LVDS, Indiranagar
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Laughter On The Platter
Escape your Monday blues by ending your day with a laughter-filled evening complemented with a combination of great snacks.

WHEN: March 18, 7.30pm
WHERE: Glen's BakeHouse, Kalyan Nagar
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Girls' Night
A special karaoke time dedicated only to you and your girl gang. Sing to all your favourite tunes and dance to your heart's content.

WHEN: March 18, 2pm & 4pm
WHERE: Casa Karaoke, JP Nagar
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Write From The Heart
A meet-and-greet session for all the poets and storytellers in the town and a platform to share the words woven together by them.

WHEN: March 19, 7.30pm
WHERE: Lahe Lahe, Kodihalli
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Sound Therapy
Relax your mind and body by a sound meditation session accompanied with breathing exercises. Let the expert Tanmayi guide you throughout.

WHEN: March 18, 5pm & 6.30pm
WHERE: Salarpuria Sattva Magnificia, Mahadevapura
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Sway With Salsa
Bring your love for Salsa to stage and form a community of fellow Salsa lovers in the town as you enjoy an evening full of fun and dance.

WHEN: March 18, 8pm
WHERE: QUBE Cafe, Jayanagar
DETAILS: allevents.in

Furniture Fair
Check out this exhibition that brings to you some of the best Italian furniture designs from inside and outside the country.

WHEN: March 19, 6.30pm
WHERE: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

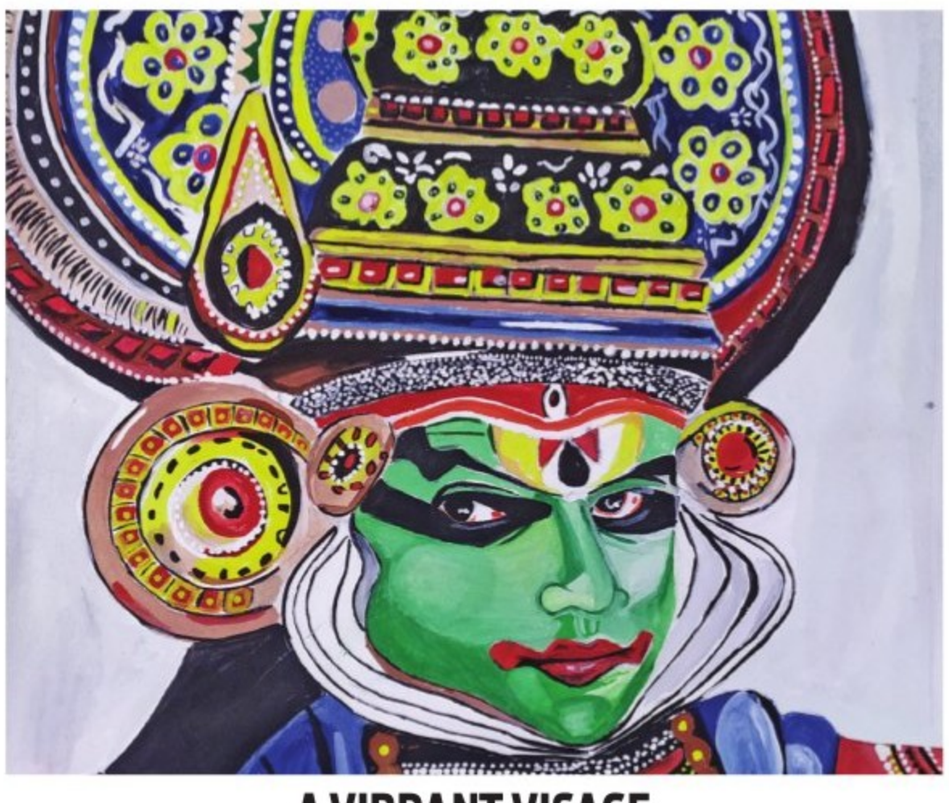
Creating Culture
Join this special training session along with your team and get lessons on how to create a corporate culture that fosters productivity and retains the employees because of the working environment.

WHEN: March 19, 9.30am
WHERE: RG Royal Hotel & Convention, Yesvantpur
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Style Your Bag
Get another unique addition to your style statement as you take home a tote bag painted and designed by you. Open for both beginners and experts!

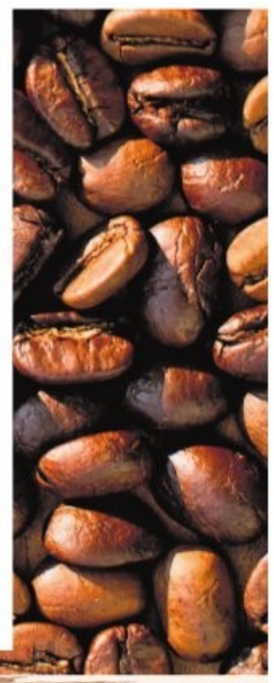
WHEN: March 18, 1pm
WHERE: Small World, Koramangala
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

ARTCORNER



A VIBRANT VISAGE

A hand-painted portrait of a Kathakali dancer from Kerala, contributed by *CE* reader Hitesh G, Bengaluru.



KAAPI KATHE

As India's filter coffee froths in the glory of being adjudged the second best coffee in the world, *CE* traces its origins from the slopes of Chikkamagaluru

RONNIE KURIAKOSE

THE tale of how coffee, a humble bean, found its roots in India is an intriguing one and involves ancient source trades, a daring heist, colonial expansion and the mushrooming of digital platforms.

The origins

Though its historical roots can be traced to Africa, it was Yemen in West Asia which emerged as the powerhouse of coffee cultivation, exporting the commodity to all corners of the then-known world. Arab merchants who were engaged in trade with India, the epicentre of the spice trade, introduced roasted coffee to the subcontinent, where it quickly captivated the elites, sparking a surge in demand.

As the demand for the bean outpaced supply, it was clear that the commodity had to be locally grown. But many factors prevented this. To retain their monopoly over coffee cultivation, Yemeni farmers and producers allowed only roasted beans to be sold. The penalty for the sale of green coffee beans was death.

The heist

In 1670, Indian Sufi saint Baba Budan, who was returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, was by chance exposed to coffee in Yemen. After learning as much as possible about the bean, he devised ways to bring the seeds back home. He hid seven beans in his beard and cane, and made the long voyage back to India.

Once he was home, he planted the beans on the slopes of Chandragiri Hills in Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka. This act not only marked the genesis of coffee cultivation in India but also sowed the seeds of a thriving coffee culture that would spread across the country. The hills are now referred to as the Baba Budangiri Hills and a shrine has been built there in his honour.

The expansion

If this was the inception of coffee cultivation in India, colonial expansion proved to be the turning point. In the 18th century, realising the potential of the Indian climate for coffee cultivation, the British began large-scale plantations in the southern states. To date, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu form the core of the traditional coffee-growing region, contributing a whopping 92 per cent of the country's coffee production.

The French influence on Indian coffee cannot be discounted. It is evident in the use of chicory, a roasted root vegetable that adds a characteristic earthy bitterness to the coffee. Indeed, this era saw the establishment of systematic cultivation methods.

Notable among them is the development of the Monsoon Malabar coffee, a unique process adapting to the challenges of sea transport.

The industry

Post-Independence, India witnessed a significant shift in the coffee industry with the establishment of the Indian Coffee Board and the enactment of the Coffee Act of 1942. These developments facilitated a more organised and supportive environment for coffee growers, leading to the predominance of smallholder production. Today, a significant percentage of coffee growers in India are small farmers.

These years also saw coffee being cultivated beyond the traditional belt — to the eastern coasts of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, and to the northeastern states. This diversification introduced a variety of microclimates and terroirs, contributing to the unique profiles of Indian coffee, including the distinctive Indian-monsooned coffee.

The culture

Coffee in India has transcended its status as merely a crop. Today, it has woven itself into the cultural fabric. Especially in the south where traditional filter coffee is a revered daily ritual.

The digital age has ushered in a new chapter for Indian coffee, with the emergence of exclusive brands and the rise of online marketplaces. This transformation has democratised access to premium coffee, allowing consumers to enjoy high-quality brews with the click of a button.

From the daring heist of Baba Budan to the digital marketplace, the evolution of Indian coffee is as refreshing as the beverage itself.

OORU'S BREWS

MONIKA MONALISA

WAKING up to the aroma of freshly-brewed filter coffee is not merely a ritual for most South Indians but a lifestyle that has received generational love.

This romance of Indians with filter coffee caught the world's attention when it bagged the second position in the recently-released list of 'Top 38 Coffees In The World' by food and travel guide platform TasteAtlas.

The list has opened up a whole new discussion about the best places to have filter coffee in namma ooru. Turns out the beauty of Bengaluru is that every area has joints where people vouch for their cuppa. If you are one of those whose life begins after the right kind of filter coffee – the perfect decoction with the right percentage of the chicory, here's a curated guide of *CE*'s favourite spots to score the best filter coffee.

BRAHMIN'S COFFEE BAR: One of the most popular joints in the south Bengaluru area of Basavanagudi, Brahmin's is a no-fuss place with a fixed menu. Crisp vadas with a side of chutney, washed down with some filter coffee is what many stand in long queues for. If you are lucky, you might witness the theatrics in the coffee section – the mixing of the strong decoction with milk for some bisi-bisi coffee. *Price: ₹22*

MTR: Mavalli Tiffin Room, aka MTR, which recently turned 100, is not just known for its rava idli but also its cup of double-strong coffee. If you are someone who likes your coffee without any chicory, this should be on your list. The original branch is on Lalbagh Road, where they supposedly roast their coffee beans and grind them every day to keep the aroma intact. *Price: ₹54*

CTR: Central Tiffin Room or CTR in Malleswaram is a must-visit place for anyone visiting namma ooru. Many celebrities like Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma have braved the fan crowd to enjoy the famous benne dosae. The best way to round up that butter-filled dosae is with a tumbler of filter coffee. *Price: ₹25*

INDIA COFFEE HOUSE: A no-frills, government-run place, India Coffee House on Church Street has been a meeting point for poets, artists, and literati. The coffee served here has a distinct flavour that is better tasted than described! *Price: ₹30*

AIRLINES HOTEL: Tucked away near Lavelle Road, Airlines is a favourite haunt for old Bengalureans, who vouch for its coffee. With the right amount of sweetness, the filtered brew is served in a glass tumbler with milk froth on top of the coffee being their specialty. *Price: ₹50*

Brahmin's Coffee Bar's iconic filter coffee | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS **CLASSIFIEDS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Nikhil V Jolad Residing at 1st Floor, H.No.389/1, 14th 'B' Cross, 2nd Phase, 2nd Stage, Shri Gayatri Yagna Kuteera, Mahalakshmipuram Layout, Bengaluru - 560086 have updated my name from Nikhil Jolad to Nikhil V Jolad vide affidavit dated 15.03.2024 Sworn before Notary Prakasha.C, Bengaluru .

CHANGE OF NAME
I, PRABHA DERASRIYA (OLD NAME), AGED 53 YEARS, W/O SUNIL KUMAR, RESIDING AT FLAT NO H-502, SNOWDROP BLOCK, NO 9, K P AGRAHARA MAIN ROAD, MAGADI ROAD, BENGALURU 560023, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME **PRABHA JAIN (NEW NAME)** VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 06/MAR/2024, SWORN BEFORE NOTARY S. I. BALAGURU, BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NAGARAJA BANGALORE MUNIYAPPA,** S/o. Muniyappa, residing at #357, 11th Main, 1st Block, 3rd Stage, Manjunathanagar, WOC Road, Bengaluru 560010, have changed my name to **NAGARAJ BANGALORE MUNIYAPPA,** vide Affidavit Dated: 15/03/2024, sworn before Notary **S.I.BALAGURU,** Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT
I, **SHIRAZ AHMED,** S/o Maqbool Ahmed, age 55 years, R/at No. 456/A, B Cross Pipe Line, Nimra Masque Road, Ilyaz Nagar, Bangalore-560 078 do hereby declare that both the names **SHIRAZ AHMED** and **SHIRAZ AHMED MAKBOOL AHMED** are one and the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **SHIRAZ AHMED** only for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 16th March 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **L. PUTTARAJU** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SANTOSH N. JOSHI S/o Narasimha C Joshi, aged about 45 years, (Date of Birth 10.02.1978), residing at No.17/2, 2nd Cross, 2nd Stage, Kirloskar Layout, Basaveshwaranagar, Near Shankar Mutt, Bengaluru-560 079, have changed my name from **SANTOSH** to **SANTOSH N. JOSHI,** vide affidavit dated 16/3/2024 sworn to before S.Venkatasubba Reddy advocate and notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, A.ASMA BEGUM, W/o.Mr.Syed Siraj Ahmed, Residing at # 336/1, New No.35, 1st Floor, Church Street, Shamana Lane, Murgesh Palya, Vimanapura, Bangalore-560 017, that after my marriage I have changed my name as ASMA ANJUM hence I may be called as ASMA ANJUM only. I have sworn to the affidavit before the Notary Public, Sri.C.V.Earappa, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SWETHA KUMARI V,** D/o. Vijaya Kumar C. R/a #81/1, 2nd Floor, Patel Muniyappa Layout, V Nagenahalli, R.T.Nagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru-560032 declare that in the Baptism Certificate as my name recorded as **SWETHA DEBORA** and now have changed my Name to **SWETHA KUMARI V** also my Date of Birth wrongly entered as 31.01.1989 instead of my Correct DOB: 31.08.1989 vide affidavit dated 4.3.2024 before Notary S. Samuel Solomon, Bangalore.

AFFIDAVIT
I, **KALAVATI DEVI,** Aged about 76 years, W/o. Sri Surendra Sharma, R/at Badi, Tengarala, Shahar Rampur Post, Naubatpur, Patna, Bihar - 801 109, now at Bangalore, do hereby declare that, in all the educational related Marks Card, T.C. etc., of my daughter Daisy Sharma my name is reflected as **KAMALA SHARMA,** in the Aadhar Card and PAN Card and other documents of me, my name is shown as **KALAVATI DEVI.** I state that both the names belongs to me only. I hereby declare that hereinafter the concern authorities may consider my name as **KAMALA SHARMA @ KALAVATI DEVI** vide affidavit dated 16.03.2024 sworn to before D.S. Chandrakanth, Advocate and Notary, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, NAMAN JAIN (OLD NAME), AGED 53 YEARS, S/O SUNIL KUMAR, RESIDING AT FLAT NO H-502, SNOWDROP BLOCK, NO 9, K P AGRAHARA MAIN ROAD, MAGADI ROAD, BENGALURU 560023, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME **NAMAN JAIN (NEW NAME)** VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 02/MAR/2024, SWORN BEFORE NOTARY MEER HASSAN, BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, PRADEEP KUMAR KOTHARI HUKMICHAND (OLD NAME), AGED ABOUT 57 YEARS, S/O CHAINRAJ GOTAWAT MANGILAL, RESIDING AT NO 6/1, RATNA VILAS ROAD, OPP KREST PART APARTMENTS, BASAVANAGUDI, BENGALURU, 560004, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO **PRADEEP KUMAR KOTHARI (NEW NAME),** VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 05/MAR/2024, SWORN BEFORE NOTARY GANGARAJU. B. N, BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Smt P P Rohini** W/o No. 15311933A Ex-Hav Poonacha PTpresently residing at # 33/A, 14th Main, AGS Layout, Arehalli,Bangalore, Dist - Bangalore Urban, Karnataka have changed my name from **P P Rohini** to **Rohini B D,** vide Affidavit dated 30/01/2024 before **N Thulasi,** Advocate and Notary, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **CHETHANA.H,** S/o Honnappa.H.G, aged about 27, R/at No.40, Honnenahalli, Kadur Taluk, Chikamagaluru Dist, Karnataka, PIN-577182, Today at Bangalore. I declare that, in all the proceedings, records etc., My name has been stated as **Chethana.H,**
I have changed my name from **"CHETHANA.H" to "CHETHAN.H"** hereafter in all my official record, title deed or things, I wish to be called and known **"CHETHAN.H"** only. vide Sworn Affidavit dated **15.03.2024** before **S.T.Thippeswamy** Advocate and Notary Public Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MALLIKARJUNAPPA. M.N, @ MALLIKARJUNA M. N, aged about 52 years, S/o Nagappa, R/at C/o Channathimmaiah No.5, 1st Main Road, Goruguntepalya, Bengaluru-560022, have changed my name from **K.MAHENDRA to MALLIKARJUNA M.N,** vide affidavit dated 15/3/2024 sworn to before Anitha Bai advocate and notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, BRINDA, Aadhar No.2794 6576 4052 Aged about 24 years, C/o. Srinivasappa, residing at Valmiki Nagar, 2nd Block, Bagepalli Chikkaballapur, Karnataka-561207 have changed my name from **SPOORTHI to BRINDA** vide Affidavit Dated 16-03-2024 sworn to before Notary Public S.R. Ravikumar, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Veeresh Sharanayya Hiremath,** D/o. Sharanayya Sanagyya Hiremath, Aged about 35 years, Currently residing at Rachoteshwar Nagar, Near Vijay Nagar School, Gadag, Karnataka - 582 101, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **Veeresh Sharanayya Hiremath** to **Sanvi Hiremath** vide affidavit dated 06.03.2024 sworn to before C.V. Earappa, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Mrs. MANJULA BOMMAIAH** D/o Late. Bommaiah and W/o R.B. Nagendra Resident of No. 41, 5th Cross, 1st Main Road, Jaimaruthinagar, Nandini Layout, Bangalore-560 096 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **MANJULA PILLAHALLI BOMMAIAH** to **MANJULA BOMMAIAH,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **MANJULA BOMMAIAH** only for all purposes vide affidavit dated 14/03/2024 sworn before Advocate and Notary D.G. Shanthappa at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, VASANTHA PRADEEP KOTHARI (OLD NAME), AGED ABOUT 55 YEARS, W/O PRADEEP KUMAR KOTHARI, RESIDING AT NO 6/1, RATNA VILAS ROAD, OPP KREST PART APARTMENTS, BASAVANAGUDI, BENGALURU, 560004, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO **VASANTA BAI KOTHARI (NEW NAME),** VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 05/MAR/2024, SWORN BEFORE NOTARY GANGARAJU. B. N, BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
We, **SURESH** S/o Chandrashekar, aged about 42 years, **NANDINI Y S** W/o Suresh, aged about 29 years, R/at No. 22/23, Mahadeshwaranagar, Pipeline Road, Herohalli Cross, Bangalore - 560091, have changed our Son's name from **SHIVAKUMAR S** (old name) to **BHUVAN S**(new name) for all purposes vide affidavit dated 15-03-2024 sworn before Notary Ratna N, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VINAY .T.U,** S/o Umadev T.A, age 38 years, R/a Near Renuka Temple, harelepete, Tumkur, presently R/at No. 21, "Vasista' 2nd Main, Poornapragna Layout, Kathriguppe, BSK III Stage, Bengaluru-560 085 do hereby declare that I have changed daughter's name from **AADHYA V DEV** to **AADHYA VINAY,** henceforth she shall be known and called as **AADHYA VINAY** only for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 05-03-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **K.V. BACHI REDDY** at Bangalore.

NAME DECLARATION
I, **SOWMYA,** W/o.S.Bhaskaran, D/o Subramani. K, aged about 39 years, R/at No.251, 5th Main, 1st Stage, 1st Phase, Manjunathanagar, Rajajinagar, Bangalore -10.
In my entire records such as Adhaar Card & Pan card mentioned my name as **"Sowmya"** Whereas in my SSLC marks card & Birth Certificate mentioned as **"Soumya K.S."** instead of **Sowmya.K.S.** and after marriage my name is called & recognized as **"Sowmya Bhaskaran" "Sowmya.K.S" & "Sowmya Bhaskaran"** both the name belongs to me & same Person only, vide Sworn Affidavit dated **16.03.2024** before **R.Sulakshana,** Advocate and Notary Public Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **HARISH BASABATHALA PRAKASAM, S/o Prakasam, Residing at: Flat No. 014, Ground Floor, Silver Park Apartment, Reliable Residency Layout, Haralukunte, Bangalore-560102 have changed my name to HARISH PRAKASAM** Vide Affidavit dated 16.03.2024 sworn before advocate and notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, AYITHA NAGAMANI, D.O.B: 13.10.1964, W/o. Ayetha Raghunath, Residing at No. 12-2-936, Sai Nagar, 2nd Cross, Anantapur, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh-515001, have changed my name to **AYETHA NAGAMANI** vide affidavit dated: 16.03.2024 before notary GANGARAJU .B.N., Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT
I, **Santhosh Kumar** S/o. Jayaram, Aged about 39 years, Residing at 6th Block, 3rd Cross, B.N.R. Layout, Bommasandra, Bommasandra Industrial Estate, Bommasandra Post, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru District - 560 099, hereby declare that **Santhosh Kumar** and **Santhosha** both the names are one and the same person. I further state that my date of Birth is 5.02.1984 entered in Aadhar Card, but in my passport wrongly entered as 19/02/1986. Vide affidavit dated 16.03.2024 sworn to before Smt. Vatsala, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of Karnataka, Bengaluru.

ANNOUNCEMENT
I, **APPANERAVANDA LEELAVATHY GANAPATHY,** Aged 81 Years, Date of Birth, 26.10.1942 (Twenty Six October Ninteen Forty Two) W/o Late A.M. Ganapathy, Residing at No.235, 1st Cross, 2nd Block, 3rd Phase, Banashankari 3rd Stage, Bengaluru - 560085, Hereby Declare that the Names **APPANERAVANDA LEELAVATHY GANAPATHY** and **LEELA GANAPATHY** Belong to one and the Same person and shall be Referred to as **APPANERAVANDA LEELAVATHY GANAPATHY** Vide Affidavit Dated 14th March 2024, Sworn before Notary C.V. Earappa, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, PRASHANT KOTHARI PRADEEP (OLD NAME), AGED ABOUT 33 YEARS, S/O PRADEEP KUMAR KOTHARI, RESIDING AT NO 2880, 15TH A CROSS, 2ND MAIN, B S K 2ND STAGE, BENGALURU, 560070, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO **PRASHANT KOTHARI (NEW NAME)** VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 05/MAR/2024, SWORN BEFORE NOTARY GANGARAJU. B. N. BENGALURU.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NIKHIL GUNVANTBHAI PATEL** S/o Gunvantbhai Devjibhai Patel, age 33 years, R/at No. 102, Krima Avenue Apartment, 11th Cross, Prakruthi Township, Near Maruthi Vidhyalaya, Horamavu Agara, Benglauru-560 043 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **NIKHILKUMAR GUNVANTLAL PATEL** to **NIKHIL GUNVANTBHAI PATEL,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **NIKHIL GUNVANTBHAI PATEL** only, vide affidavit dated 13-3-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **Sumithra N.** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NINGANAGOUDA K PATIL,** S/o Late Kotrugouda .K Patil, age 43 years, R/at NO. 81/39, 2nd Floor, 12th D Cross, Shivanagara, behind Siddaganga School, Bengaluru North, Rajajinagara, Bengaluru-560 010 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **NINGANAGOUDA K PATIL** and **NINGANA GOUDA K REDDY** are one and the same and refers to me only, my correct name is **NINGANAGOUDA K PATIL,** vide affidavit dated 16th March 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **PRAKASHA .C,** Bangalore.

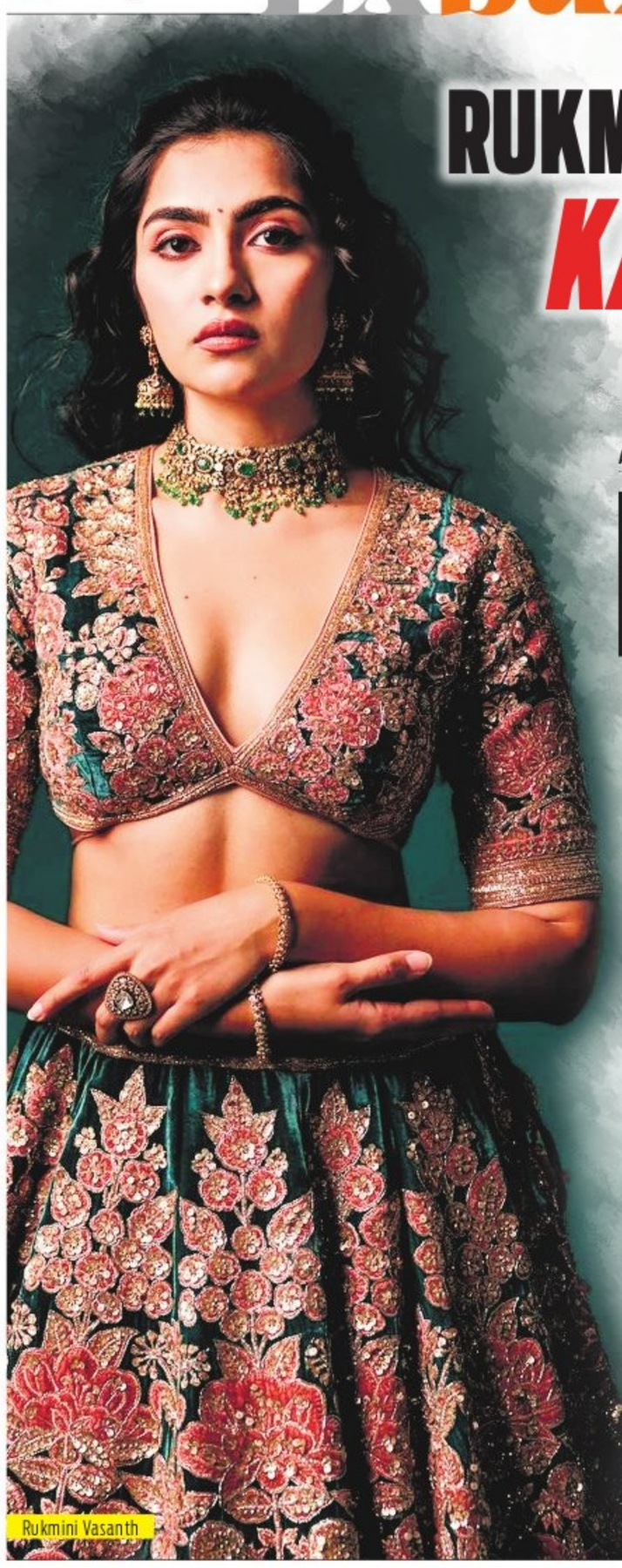
DECLARATION
I, KATTAMANCHI SOWBHAGYA (K SOWBHAGYA), aged 40 years, W/o. K Devendra Kumar, residing at No. 21-300/A, D Venganapalli, Sugar Factory Back, Chittoor Dist., Andhra Pradesh – 517 004, hereby declare that the names KATTAMANCHI SOWBHAGYA, K SOWBHAGYA, SOWBHAGYA KATTAMANCHI and SOWBHAGYA GUMMADI belong to the one and the same person and shall be referred to as KATTAMANCHI SOWBHAGYA (K SOWBHAGYA) instead of my existing name of SOWBHAGYA GUMMADI vide affidavit dated 14th March 2024 sworn before Notary C V Earappa, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Christy Jothy** (NOK) is legally wedded spouse of No. 15323313W, Rank : Ex Havildar, Name : Leo Stalin Roy L, presently residing at #524, 2nd Cross, Patel Nanjundappa Road, RS Palya, MS Nagar Post, Bengaluru – 560 033, Karnataka do hereby declare that both the names i.e **Christy Jothy** and **J Christy Jothy** are one and the same belongs to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **J Christy Jothy** only vide affidavit dated 16 Mar 2024 sworn before Advocate and Notary, Uday Kumar K, Govt of India Reg No 22116, No 15, 1st Main, 1st Cross Chinappa Layout, Kempapura Bengaluru – 560 024 at Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, AITHA RAGHUNATH, D.O.B: 01.07.1954, S/o. Late Ayetha Eswaraiah, Residing at No. 12-2-936, Sai Nagar, 2nd Cross, Anantapur, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh-515001, have changed my name to **AYETHA RAGHUNATH** vide affidavit dated: 16.03.2024 before notary GANGARAJU .B.N., Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT
I, **DAISY SHARMA,** Aged about 39 years, D/o. Sri. Surendra Sharma, W/o. Ajay Kumar, R/at G-302, Godrej E-City Apartment, Doddathoguru Village, Beguru Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore - 560 100, do hereby declare that, in all my educational related Marks Card, T.C. etc., my mother's name is reflected as **KAMALA SHARMA,** in the Aadhar Card and PAN Card and other documents of my mother her name is shown as **KALAVATI DEVI.** I state that both the names belongs to my mother only. I hereby declare that my mother name herein after may be included as **KAMALA SHARMA @ KALAVATI DEVI** vide affidavit dated 16.03.2024 sworn to before D.S. Chandrakanth, Advocate and Notary. Bengaluru.

For SMARTADS && INDIAN EXPRESS CLASSIFIEDS
Contact : Mr Ravi Kumar
9886550650
080-22866893


Rukmini Vasanth

RUKMINI VASANTH IN TALKS FOR KANTARA CHAPTER 1?

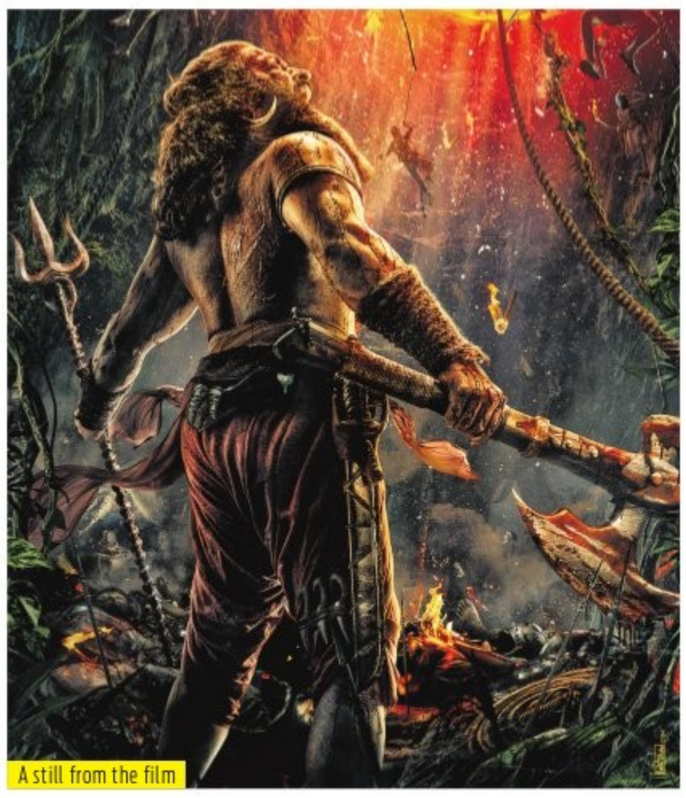
Hombale Films and director Rishab Shetty is in the process of finalising the heroine for their film, for which actor Rukmini Vasanth reportedly underwent a look test recently

A SHARADHAA

ACTOR-director Rishab Shetty, known for his groundbreaking work in *Kantara* (2022) in Kannada and other languages, has raised the bar once again with the much-anticipated prequel, *Kantara-Chapter 1*. The period action thriller, produced by Hombale Films, recently created a stir with its sneak peek, hinting at a rooted and intriguing storyline, like the original.

While the project has quietly commenced filming, details such as the cast details have been closely guarded by the makers. Apart from Rishab Shetty reprising his role as the lead, and a few familiar faces from the original *Kantara*, the details regarding the extended cast, particularly the female lead, largely remain under wraps. While speculations regarding the potential cast members are rife, recent reports suggest that the makers are in talks with the Rukmini Vasanth.

Rukmini Vasanth, known for her standout performances in Hemanth M Rao-Rakshit Shetty's *Sapta Sagaradaache Ello* 1 and 2, has emerged as a sought-after talent in Kannada cinema and in other languages. Sources indicate that Rukmini has undergone a screen test for the role, with discussions underway.


A still from the film

Meanwhile, Rukmini, who is juggling between multiple projects, is currently looking forward to the release of *Bagheera* starring Sriimurali. She also has *Bairathi Ranagal*, a mass entertainer directed by Narth, in which she stars alongside Shivarajkumar. The actor is also gearing up for her Tamil debut opposite Vijay Sethupathi in a film helmed by Arumugakumar. Additionally, she is part of a big project directed by AR Murugadoss, in which she is set to share the screen with Sivakarthekeyan.

With Rukmini's ascent as a rising heroine, her potential involvement in *Kantara-Chapter 1* adds further excitement to an already eagerly awaited project. As negotiations progress, an official confirmation is expected from the team, provided her casting materialises.

The creative team of *Kantara* includes Rishab Shetty, and the writers — Anirudh Mahesh and Shanil Guru taking part in script-writing, Aravind Kashyap handling the cinematography, and music by Ajaneesh Loknath.

A still from the film

Sagar Puranik to debut as a lead in his upcoming directorial Venkya

The shooting for the film, produced by Wadeyar Films, has begun in Hubballi

CE FEATURES

PAVAN Wadeyar and Sagar Puraniak, who are collaborating on another interesting project after *Dollu*, have kick-started the shooting for the film on March 15 in Hubbali. The film, titled *Venkya*, is said to trace the protagonist's life journey. Interstingly, Sagar Puranik is not only directing *Venkya* but also acting in the film. The director and actor, who has previously played a supporting character in *Ring Road Shubha* will be playing the titular role in *Venkya*. The upcoming project is produced by Apeksha and Pavan Wadeyar under the Wadeyar Films banner, along with Avinash V Rai and Mohan Lal Menon.

"Acting will be another exciting journey, and I am glad that I am starting this with *Venkya*. It's a different kind of film. Although it's a story from North Karnataka, the theme is universal. It's a new kind of commercial film for the industry," says Sagar Puranik, who adds that he will reveal details about the cast soon. Shreenidhi DS has penned the screenplay and dialogues for the film which will also feature cinematography by Pranav Mulay and a musical score by Hemanth Jois.

Sagar Puranik

Teen Titans live-action film is in the works

CE FEATURES

THE *Teen Titans*, which first came out as a DC Comics creation in the 1960s, will soon have a live-action adaptation. DC Studios has chosen Ana Nogueira as the scriptwriter for the project. This further cements Nogueira's relationship with the production house of Peter Safran and James Gunn; she is already writing for Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow.

The first time the *Teen Titans* appeared as a comic book, it had characters like Kid Flash, Aqualad, Robin, and Wonder Girl. Later editions of the *Teen Titans* included Green Arrow and his sidekick Speedy. The *Teen Titans* only appealed to the younger lot for a long time until George Perez and Marv Wolfman relaunched it and made it a big-seller two decades later. It gave rise to a TV series called Teen Titans Go! and a film titled *Teen Titans* Go! To the Movie. The original Teen Titan characters have also made video game appearances, alongside other media appearances.

Nogueira started out as an actor before becoming a playwright with 'Which Way to the Stage' and signing up for Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow.

Sathish Ninasam and Rachita Ram's *Matinee* to hit theatres on this date

A still from the film

CE FEATURES

SATHISH Ninasam and Rachita Ram, who previously captivated audiences with Mahesh Kumar's *Ayogya*, especially with the 'Enammai' song, are all set to grace the silver screen once again in a romantic thriller, titled *Matinee*. The film is in the final stages of post-production, and its release date has been finalised. *Matinee* will hit the big screens on April 5

Matinee marks the maiden directorial venture of Manohar Kaampalli. The film has already gained attention among audiences because of its soul-stirring soundtrack. The song 'Sanje Mele Sumane Phonu', composed by Poornachandra Tejaswi and voice rendered by Vijay Prakash, has gained traction among music enthusiasts, positioning itself as one of the top chartbusters even before the film's release.

Apart from Sathish and Rachita the film also features actors Nagabhushan and Shivraj K R Pete in pivotal roles. The technical crew of *Matinee* comprises cinematography by Kranthi Varla and editing by KM Prakash.

Jason Bateman, Jude Law team up for a Netflix series

CE FEATURES

STREAMING service Netflix has announced a new limited series starring and executive produced by actors Jason Bateman and Jude Law.

Titled *Black Rabbit*, the show comes from creators Zach Baylin, best known for writing King Richard and Bob Marley: One Love, and Kate Susman, Netflix said in a press release. They will also be the executive producers of the show.

Bateman, who earlier headlined the streaming service's critically-acclaimed series Ozark, will also direct the first two episodes of *Black Rabbit*.

The official logline for the series which has been in development since October 2022 states, "When the owner of a New York City hotspot (*Law*) allows his turbulent brother (*Bateman*) back in his life, he opens the door to escalating dangers that threaten to bring down everything he's built."

The ensemble will also include Cleopatra Coleman, Amaka Okafor, and Dagmara Dominczyk.

BHARJARI GANDU GETS A RELEASE DATE

Kiran Raj

The film starring Kiran Raj and directed by Prasiddh is set to hit theaters in April

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Kiran Raj, who made a transition from serials to films, has been busy with a number of projects. One of his latest endeavours, *Bharjari Gandu*, is now gearing up for release on April 5. Helmed by *Ratnamanjarii* director Prasiddh, the makers of the film announced the release date and provided more updates about the film at the trailer launch event.

Prasiddh, who has also penned the story and screenplay for his sophomore, *Bhrajhari Gandu*, says, "My friend and cinematographer, Kitty Kaushik, introduced me to many talented artists for this film, including actor Kiran Raj. The actor, famous for his charming persona, is portraying an action hero in *Bharjari Gandu*. On the film's story, he adds, "*Bharjari Gandu* tells a story of rural romance. It's about a hero who goes to great lengths for his village and its people without any bounds."

The film is produced by Anil Kumar and Madan Goud, under the Famous Films banner and stars Yasha Shivakumar as the female lead and Nisarga Lakshman in a pivotal role. The cast also includes Ramesh Bhat, Rohith Nagesh, Rakesh Raj, and Saurabh Kulkarni as prominent characters. Gumineni Vijay has scored the film's music.

Apart from this, Kiran Raj has an untitled film in post-production, *Ronny* directed by Gurutej Shetty, and *Baddis*, *Chicken Puliyogre*, *Chatushpatha*, and *Vikram Gowda*, at different stages of production.